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PREFACE

In publishing Miss Curtis' study of institution libraries, I am sure the University of Minnesota is rendering a notable service not only to libraries and public institutions, but also to the general public which is still shockingly ignorant of how its institutions are really administered. This little volume stands unique in its field, as it brings together a large amount of first-hand material secured through original research, in addition to collating scattered papers on single phases of the problem. It administers a definitive refutation to the popular fallacy that institution libraries are a fad and that inmates of such institutions can not and will not make use of them. I confess to having been surprised at finding how many institutions looked upon their libraries as integral parts of their work. Any undue elation was checked, however, by observing how uneven the library equipment runs and how far we still have to go before it becomes really adequate in many places.

The popularizing of institutions as the result of their gradual coming under state control, and the consequent raising of standards of care, has meant that they house an increasing number of superior patients, capable of appreciating means of culture and refinement. Hence the tendency to carry over into the institution the function of books as part of normal free cultivated life. But more than that: books and music have been demonstrated to possess therapeutic value both in preventive and reëducative work for the handicapped mentally or physically. Their value for the convalescent has long been utilized, as in the tuberculosis sanatoria. And as preventives of nervous disorders they have been scarcely less popular. But only recently has their value as a preventive of incipient dementia or as a restorative in certain cases of insanity been recognized.

Add to these facts the further discovery that good books aid in the morale and discipline of an institution for juvenile delinquents; that these delinquents are voracious readers; that the habit of reading creates a "diversion" from less constructive habits; that in reformatories the library plays the rôle of continuation school; that in the care and education of the feeble-minded books frequently are the most potent means for focusing and energizing a sluggish mind; and you get some idea of how significant and practical this problem really is.

The free population of this country with its more or less irresponsible attitude toward the public library would do well to follow the example of the prisoner or the insane or the feeble-minded; for Miss Curtis, herself instructor in a university library school, shows how inmates not only do not destroy their books, but even conserve them as their most precious treasures. And when it comes to comparative use of library facilities the

institution records are astounding. The annual turnover per volume in some institutions runs as high as 29 issuances, and 15 is quite common. The ordinary city must hump itself to approach within siege-gun shot of such a record.

The war has added its confirmation of these facts. In the light of them we understand perhaps more clearly why the American Library Association has been making its "drive" for books and library staffs in army training camps. Many of the same conditions are common to the camp and to the institution.

Miss Curtis in making this study has done pioneer service to the cause of mental therapeutics and has added a notable chapter to the library's record as an agency for practical social welfare. It is one more straw indicating how the current of thought flows away from conceiving the library as a jewel box to be kept under lock and key, and toward a more dynamic faith in its powers as an institution for all the children of all the people. Who will, therefore, dare hereafter to call such special libraries fads or seek to obtain a charitable glow by unloading upon soldiers or upon state institutions moldy books of sermons, trashy novels, antiquated catalogues and fashion books, or other such publishers' junk?

ARTHUR J. TODD

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THE LIBRARIES OF THE AMERICAN STATE AND NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR DEFECTIVES, DEPENDENTS, AND DELINQUENTS

CHAPTER I

STATE AND NATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

1. HISTORICAL SKETCH

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, there were in the United States, four state institutions for dependents, defectives, and delinquents: the New York penitentiary, established in 1797; that of Massachusetts, established in 1785; and the two institutions of Virginia, the hospital for the insane, and the prison, founded in 1763 and 1797 respectively. Previous to this time, the problem of state custodial care had not assumed serious proportions. The settlements of the new world attracted people of mental and physical vigor, and the hard conditions of pioneer life weeded out the physically weak. The abundance of healthy outdoor work and the ready justice of the frontier helped to settle the question of criminality; life was not so differentiated, master and servant, employer and wage earner, shared more nearly the same work and the same conditions of health and comfort. Yet, even in colonial times, there was a constantly increasing number of people who were a menace to others. Vagabonds and malefactors in large numbers were transported from Great Britain and Ireland to the colonies. The Indian raids, with their trail of burned homesteads, and the epidemics which swept the communities, added to the number of children who must be adopted or taken as indentured helpers and the homeless men and women who became vagrants. The care of the insane, always a heavy burden upon the family, was early found to be a community problem. Connecticut in 1750 provided for the public relief of the indigent and homeless insane. The legal code of the day did not prevent crime, and local workhouses and jails were necessary. After the Revolution there were injured soldiers, to whom the state gave aid, and the care of the aged and destitute became more and more a public charge. The second decade of the century saw the beginning of the state's instruction of the deaf, at Hartford, Connecticut, in 1817. The first public school for the blind was not opened until 1837, in Ohio. New York City, in 1825, established a reformatory for juvenile delinquents; the first of these institutions under state control was that at Westborough, Massachusetts, opened in 1847, and to Ohio belongs the credit of initiating the movement for industrial schools, in 1854. A state institution for the

feeble-minded was founded in New York in 1851; Ohio established in 1892 a separate institution for epileptics.

By the close of the Civil War, most of the states had provided for the increasing number of the population who were in need of community aid. Many of the institutions founded in this period were homes for soldiers and their wives and widows. The state public school at Monson, Massachusetts, was the first public institution for dependent children. The Elmira reformatory, established in 1876, made provision for the young or first-time offender of adult age; this was followed, in 1897, by the Reformatory for Women at South Framingham, Massachusetts. In 1884, the success of the Trudeau sanatorium stimulated state provision for those suffering from tuberculosis. The most recent types of institutions have provided for inebriates and for vagrants. At the close of the twelfth decade of the nation, there were over six hundred institutions for dependents, defectives, and delinquents, supported wholly or in part by the state or national governments.

2. THE PROBLEM OF EMPLOYMENT, EDUCATION, AND RECREATION

With this growth in the number of institutions, and their specialization, a new attitude toward the wards of the state developed, not only on the part of those to whose care they were committed, but of the general community as well. It is just one hundred years since Esquirol described the condition of the insane in Europe,—suffering, neglected, loaded with chains, and cruelly punished; to-day a considerable number of the insane leave the hospitals recovered or improved, and most of those remaining can be usefully and happily employed. Much attention has been given to the education and industrial training of the mental defectives and their possibilities of productive work. The barriers which shut the blind and the deaf from communication with their fellow beings have been in large measure removed, and these classes of people are able to take their places as self-supporting members of society. Delinquency has been recognized as a problem for which society is to a great degree responsible, and provision has been made for further training and new opportunities for young offenders. Even the doctrine of retributive justice for the criminal has given way to the provisions for parole and wage payments, and the ameliorative influences which mark the new penology. As the care of the inmates of the state institution became more and more a matter of public attention and concern, there was a growing conviction that the state had not done its full duty when, comfortably housed and humanely treated, they were removed from the communities to which they were either a danger or a distress. It was recognized that remedial custodial care was of great value to society, lessening both the expense and the danger which

must follow if neglect of this portion of the population led to violence, crime, and vice, and minimizing the opportunities for the direct transmission of mental defect. To those who are physically and mentally ill, institutional care now offers the hope of cure or of amelioration; for those whose conduct has been antisocial there may be the opportunity of reformation; and for all, in some measure, there is provided employment, recreation, and some form of training and education.

The institutions have found that these provisions for employment, recreation, and scholastic and industrial training have a direct value quite distinct from any financial returns. Discipline is more easily maintained and there are fewer administrative problems; it is easier to secure competent employees of a high grade; and the public has more confidence in the institution and is more willing to contribute to its financial support. There is, in addition, in the institutions for mental defect and mental disease, a possibility for scientific study along the lines of psychology and therapeutics. The institutional library has, in some respects, advantages which are not shared by any other department. No expensive apparatus or equipment is required; the books are easily portable, and may be enjoyed in solitude or read aloud while a group is occupied; they afford diversion during the leisure time which would otherwise be spent in idleness; they help to provide the educational training of which all stand in need, and make for moral health through the stimulation which comes from wholesome mental imagery. These libraries are no longer an experiment; they play a recognized part in the successful administration of many of the most progressive institutions of the country. The superintendents who have had the benefit of up-to-date, well-chosen, and efficiently administered libraries, appreciate their importance and provide as amply as may be possible for their growth. Since the problems of the institutions differ widely, it may be well to consider the place of the library in each type and its value for different classes of readers.

CHAPTER II

THE PLACE OF THE LIBRARY IN THE INSTITUTION

1. THE INSANE HOSPITAL

The advocate of organized libraries for the patients of the insane hospitals will meet several objections from those who have not given the subject careful attention. These objections are usually three: first, that the insane through the nature of their affliction are mentally incapable of receiving any real benefit from books; secondly, that so many are disturbed and violent that books will not be safe in their hands; and, thirdly, that a library is an unnecessary fad, purchased at considerable expense for those whose comfort and well-being are in no way dependent on its use.

In answering the first objection as to the deficient mentality of the insane, it is necessary to consider somewhat the nature of their disease and the extent to which it impairs the mental faculties. Insanity, we are told, is a disease due to lesions of the brain, and marked by mental processes which are below normal or deviate from normal; intelligence is never wholly gone, sometimes lacking in a very slight degree, nor are all faculties affected evenly, as the disease may show itself most either in the intelligence, the emotions, the will, or the moral sense.¹ Nor are all those admitted to the insane hospitals largely illiterate or deficient in their education. The answers to a questionnaire, sent to these institutions in 1916, show that a large majority of the patients have completed the sixth grade of the elementary school. In a special report of the United States census, the number of the insane ten years of age and older, enumerated on January 1, 1910, was given as 159,096. Of these 75.8 per cent were literate, 19.2 per cent were illiterate, the literacy of 5 per cent was unknown; of those admitted in 1910, 84.3 per cent were literate, 11.4 per cent were illiterate, the literacy of 4.3 per cent was unknown.²

It is encouraging to note the large number of patients who are eventually sufficiently recovered to leave the institutions. The census report gives the number discharged from hospitals in 1910 as 29,304, of these 24,241, or 82.7 per cent, went out as recovered or improved. In commenting upon the fact that the age of those discharged was less than that of those admitted, the report says, "This must mean that those discharged come largely from the younger inmates . . . it also indicates that the persons discharged have usually been in hospitals a comparatively short

¹ Dr. Robert M. Phelps, *Insanity and the Care of the Insane*. 1916.

² *United States Census Special Report on the Insane*, 45, 122. 1910.

time and that the recovery or improvement in the condition of the insane generally takes place within a short time after admission or not at all."³

Dr. Thomas W. Salmon, of the United States Health Service, stated at the New York Mental Hygiene Conference of 1912, "The reports of the New York State Hospitals show that in nearly 90 per cent of the cases who recovered during the year, the duration of the mental diseases had been less than a year before admission."⁴ The biennial report of the State Hospital for the Insane at Rochester, Minnesota, for 1914-16 says, "The percentage of recoveries on admissions for this biennial period is 21.6 per cent . . . The average time in the hospital of those who recovered was less than six months. It is very forcibly impressed upon us that most of the recoveries occur during the first year, emphasizing the importance of care and treatment. . . . The average time under treatment of the recovered voluntary cases was a little over two months."⁵

A number of the cases listed as recoveries include voluntary cases for whom many states have made provision; those who fear a mental breakdown may go to a state hospital for expert care, without being committed to the institution. The success of this provision is shown by the increasing number who avail themselves of it. Dr. L. V. Briggs, secretary of the Massachusetts State Board of Insanity, reported that in 1911 there were 359 voluntary admissions to their state hospitals, and, in 1915, 963 such admissions.⁶ In the states where separate detention hospital buildings have been provided, incoming patients are placed there for observation and special treatment. These buildings have the advantage of better equipment, a specialized diet, and more expert nursing; those for whom there is still the hope that they may regain their mental health thus have the advantage of early diagnosis and individual care at a time when the chances for recovery are most favorable. Dr. Krafft-Ebing, of the University of Vienna, emphasizes the importance of such preventive therapeutics

"In the psychic treatment of the insane, two phases of the disease must be distinguished with the greatest clearness, the period of origin and the acme, and the change, either to recovery or dementia. During the development and at the height of the disease the test of mental treatment is properly negative—the removal of injurious mental influences . . . The fundamental necessity in all mental therapy at this stage of the disease is to place the patient in the greatest possible mental quietude . . . In the period when the disease changes for better or worse psychic therapy has an active part to play. The art of the alienist is here displayed in his understanding of the individuality of the patient, to lead up to the restoration of the former mental personality or at least to save all that is possible out of the mental wreck. Innumerable patients recover quickly and spontaneously when improvement is once established, and the well-regulated hospital for the insane, with its library,

³ *Ibid.*, 60.

⁴ New York Mental Hygiene Conference, *Proceedings*, 1912, 130.

⁵ Minnesota State Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1914-16, 103.

⁶ L. V. Briggs, *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 174:703-8. May 18, 1916.

its music, its amusement, parks, and means of employment has only to place these means at the disposal of the patients, with a reasonable regulation of their employment. Innumerable unfortunates, who, if left to themselves, would degenerate into . . . complete dementia, the regulations of a hospital for the insane keep at a useful mental level and make the employment of the mental powers that remain useful."⁷

A type of insanity which is represented in a large per cent of the hospital population is the manic-depressive. The admission of the manic-depressive cases to the Minnesota state hospitals for the biennium of 1914-16, were: Fergus Falls 23.9 per cent, Rochester 40.9 per cent, St. Peter 23 per cent.⁸ The famous alienist Kraepelin, of Heidelberg, says, "The best known constitutional disorders, such as hysteria, manic-depressive insanity, and psychopathic states, do not lead to a mental deterioration, but to a periodic recurrence of symptoms, with intervals of perfect health which are often long."⁹ "This is a great reading class, as their mentality is not affected," says Miss Jones, librarian of the McLean Hospital at Waverley, Massachusetts, "they read for relief from depression and to take their minds off themselves."¹⁰

The form of mental disease called dementia praecox, the insanity of the adolescent and the young adult, is the cause of a large number of the yearly admissions to the institutions. Dr. August M. Hoch, director of the psychiatric institute of the New York State Hospital, addressing the New York Mental Hygiene Conference in 1912, said: "The yearly admissions to our hospitals, which belong to this general group (dementia praecox) represent nearly a quarter of all the cases admitted, and . . . it is a conservative estimate when we say that the New York hospitals for the insane, at the present moment, take care of 15,000 such patients, that is, half the inmates of all the institutions."¹¹

Dr. Henry R. Stedman, of the Bournewood Hospital, Brookline, Massachusetts, gives similar figures. He says:

"It is safe to say that the majority of the 14,746 inmates of the Massachusetts state and private hospitals for the insane are cases—mostly chronic—whose disease began when they were young . . . Of the 3,264 new cases of mental disease admitted to the Massachusetts hospitals in 1915, 804, or over 21 per cent, were suffering from dementia praecox . . . and the allied conditions of adolescence . . . This yearly addition of cases of dementia praecox, most of whom become chronic but remain physically well, causes them to accumulate until they soon form the majority of the inmates of our state hospitals. They represent one third more admissions than the combined totals of all patients whose mental condition is due to either alcohol or syphilis, causes which are very rare in producing this form of mental

⁷ Richard von Krafft-Ebing, *Text-Book of Insanity*, 272-74.

⁸ Minnesota State Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1914-16, 96, 112, 137.

⁹ Quoted by Henry R. Stedman, *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 175:695-703. November 16, 1916.

¹⁰ Edith Kathleen Jones, Letter of April 30, 1917.

¹¹ New York Mental Hygiene Conference, *Proceedings*, 1912, 208.

disease. Of all the classified forms of insanity, moreover, dementia praecox claims by far the greatest number of victims . . . This mental condition should not be confounded with mental defect or feeble-mindedness proper . . . The mental defective, about whom wide public interest fortunately has at last been awakened, is one who had little or no mind to start with—who has been idiotic or imbecile from birth or infancy. On the contrary, most cases of dementia praecox enjoy, up to the time of their break-down, apparently sound and normal minds. A striking fact is the frequency with which the disease attacks adolescents of marked intelligence and promise. A German authority reports that large numbers of such patients are school masters, the sons of school masters and theologians. Statistics on this point give these figures: 27 per cent men and 21 per cent women had average intelligence before their mental break-down; 55 per cent men and 66 per cent women had good and even remarkable intelligence; 18 per cent men and 13 per cent women were below the average intelligence, but were not mentally defective."¹²

The reports of the Minnesota state hospitals for the biennial period of 1914-16 give the following percentages of the dementia praecox cases among the admissions for the period: Fergus Falls, 27 per cent; Rochester, 13.6 per cent; St. Peter, 32 per cent.¹³ These patients, unless their disease progresses rapidly, fall into the class which the modern hospital activity along the lines of occupational and educational interests may save from complete dementia. Many of the hospitals have two or more instructors in handicrafts and the games and sense training classes of the kindergarten. There are, in addition, the library, and special industrial rooms and wards where metal and leather work, pottery, rug making, and basketry are taught, as well as sewing, knitting, crocheting, and embroidery. In 1915, eight hospitals in Massachusetts included industrial courses in the work of the nurses' training classes. Dr. L. V. Briggs, of that state, comments upon the value of the industrial work:

"Occupation is more and more a feature in a therapeutic and curative way, and teachers are being employed to instruct many patients in arts and crafts and industrial work, so that, instead of sitting on benches and around the dormitories and wards day after day, doing nothing, they are interested in some occupation which will also interest their neighbors, and instead of becoming quarrelsome and getting tired and cross with nothing to do, to-day in the ward where the patients are occupied . . . the whole atmosphere of the ward is changed from one of depression to one of more or less cheerfulness. These teachers are also instructing the nurses, and the Board has in mind the purpose of this instruction which is that the nurses shall become teachers and helpers to the patients rather than keepers and over-seers."¹⁴

There is a movement to-day toward the reëducation of the insane, and trained kindergarteners are employed in some of the hospitals. Dr. Allen McLane Hamilton, the well-known alienist, was much impressed by the school of the Richmond District Asylum near Dublin, which he visited in 1880; he attempted to introduce such classes at Poughkeepsie, but was

¹² Henry R. Stedman, *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 175:695-703. November 16, 1916.

¹³ Minnesota State Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1914-16, 96, 112, 137.

¹⁴ L. V. Briggs, *Boston Medical and Surgical Journal* 174:703-8. May 18, 1916.

unable to carry them on, owing to a lack of support.¹⁵ Dr. W. A. Bryan, of the state hospital at Cherokee, Iowa, has recently conducted a valuable experiment in the reëducation of some of the most untidy and demented patients.¹⁶ The nature study classes have been a great success in the hospitals, as a means of training the powers of observation, and as affording the opportunity of beneficial exercise out of doors. The books on birds, flowers, and trees are in constant demand and, in at least one hospital, the librarian is in charge of the class. Dr. Robert Howland Chase, in his book, *Mental Medicine and Nursing*, considers this is a subject on which the nurses should be well informed. He says:

"Nature study classes may be found to-day in all hospitals, usually under the charge of an experienced teacher. The subject matter takes a wide range and the lessons are made as varied and attractive as the teacher's skill can make them . . . The subject is inexhaustible and when the work, or rather play, is entered into with zeal and relish there is no end to the good that may be reached."¹⁷

We have, then, in the institutions for mental disease a large number of patients who will, in a short time, go out as restored or much improved; an increasing number of these are voluntary patients who have availed themselves of the opportunity of preventive measures to avoid a mental breakdown. Conservative estimates of the chronic dementia praecox cases place them at about half of the population of these institutions; the industrial work and the educational use of books, nature study, materials, and games, serve to keep these at what Krafft-Ebing calls "a useful mental level."

If we consider in addition that probably one fifth of all admissions are cases of manic-depressive insanity, which causes only periodic mental disturbance, there would seem to be ground for the assertion that the inmates of the insane hospitals are mentally capable of receiving both enjoyment and benefit from books.

To those who are familiar with the modern hospital for the insane, the fear that many of the books provided for the institution will be destroyed by the patients is known to have no foundation in fact. Dr. Robert M. Phelps, superintendent of the St. Peter, Minnesota, state hospital, says:

"The very first institutions were truly 'madhouses,' as they were called, because only the raving and extreme cases were taken. We now may not have in the house one raving case out of fifty to one hundred people. During the last twenty-five years, more and more of quiet cases have been admitted, until half our incoming cases are intelligent enough to give us their past history with fair clearness and 90 per cent have fair general behavior, although of course, not that proportion are reliable in behavior."¹⁸

¹⁵ Allen McLane Hamilton, *Recollections of an Alienist*, 394-96.

¹⁶ W. A. Bryan, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 19:91-97. January, 1917.

¹⁷ Robert H. Chase, *Mental Medicine and Nursing*, 198.

¹⁸ Minnesota State Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1914-16, 119.

The best evidence in regard to the care of the books is given by Miss Edith Kathleen Jones, for thirteen years librarian at the McLean Hospital of Waverley, Massachusetts. In a paper read before the American Library Association in 1913, she said:

"Unless they are very ill and destructive, books are treated as carefully by the insane as by the users of public libraries. Last year, out of 8,686 volumes taken out by patients and nurses, only nine were lost or destroyed and of these only two were charged to patients. It is the proud boast of one of our head nurses, who has under him the next to the most violent and destructive ward on the men's side, that he has had out for his patients over 450 volumes in the last two years and has not lost or had mutilated one single book."¹⁹

Later, in 1915, she wrote:

"One of the head nurses at McLean Hospital . . . has had charge of the ward for sicker and more destructive men, and at first it was not thought wise to send any books in the least valuable to that ward. This nurse, however, offered to assume all responsibility, and so well have his plans worked out, that in six years he has lost or had mutilated only three books. A lover of books himself, he goes to the library once a week, returns books due, and takes out about a dozen others—travel, pictures, outdoor books, a little fiction, . . . and distributes them to his waiting patients."²⁰

Granted that the insane are mentally capable of reading, and that most of the books provided will not be mistreated or destroyed, the more important question still remains, as to whether the money spent for the maintenance and supervision of the library is justified. These institutions are usually overcrowded, none of them have an appropriation in excess of their actual needs, and many of them are seriously hampered for funds; each dollar must be spent to the best advantage. As the institutions of Iowa have had a ten years' trial of organized libraries under state supervision, the opinions of the medical superintendents of that state will be of value. In answer to a questionnaire sent to them in March 1917, they replied as follows:

"Would say that reading rooms are quite necessary in order to get the patients to read as much as they should. About three rooms in a hospital of this size (1,100 beds) would be sufficient. A better plan, I think, would be to have the library and reading rooms in a Recreation Building . . . Possibly general reading helps the insane, but feel as though it did not do any more than any other diversion. The life of the chronic insane is of course much happier on account of library books and periodicals."²¹

"My personal view is, that the time spent in reading, especially by our more intelligent patients, would be in excess of that for people outside of equal intelligence, for the reason that our people have so much more time to devote to reading than folks outside, with other work and interests. A very large number of our people

¹⁹ Edith Kathleen Jones, *American Library Association Bulletin* 6:320-24. July, 1912.

²⁰ Edith Kathleen Jones, *American Journal of Insanity* 72:297-303. October, 1913.

²¹ Dr. George Donohue, superintendent of Cherokee State Hospital. Letter of April 9, 1917.

would be incapable of profiting by library facilities. It is the aim of the nurses and the librarian to get as many people as possible interested in the library, as well as in other things; with some success in some instances, and with others, very little if any. The library is one of the first means to interest the patient after the actively disturbed period of the disorder has passed, and the intensity of the trouble has subsided, and he remains in an exhausted and listless mental condition; wherein, if left to himself, he would further deteriorate mentally. It is then our aim to waken interest in various ways, reading, music, entertainments, and occupations of various kinds, anything of a helpful nature to attract and hold the attention of the patient, so that his mental activities may be stimulated and encouraged.

"The suitable and well-directed library is certainly a help and benefit. Just how much, it is difficult to estimate. There is some demand for books other than fiction, by a small number of patients whose reading habits have been formed prior to admission here, and now and then an individual may be found who has time, and will become interested in reading other than fiction. In the matter of reëducation the library plays an important rôle."²²

Results of libraries in these institutions: "Reëducation of demented patients. Prevention of dementia in patients that might otherwise dement. Retardation of dementia in those who do dement. Exerts a moral as well as a curative effect on the patients, improving their deportment. Increases the scientific knowledge of the personnel."²³

Results of libraries in these institutions: "Good for discipline, diversion, entertainment, etc." Demand for books other than fiction: "History, mechanical, detective stories, etc."²⁴

The trained librarian who is able to compare the use of books by the insane with the reading done by people of normal mentality, can give testimony based on actual experience. Miss Jones, of the McLean Hospital, has said:

"The value of a well selected library can hardly be over-estimated as a therapeutic agent. I do not mean by this that a cure can be affected simply by reading the right books, that of course is absurd. But it is a fact recognized by all psychiatrists, and at the basis of the treatment of the insane in all hospitals to-day, that whatever takes a patient's mind off himself and his own troubles and directs his thoughts in other and more wholesome channels, contributes to his recovery. And when amusements pall, handicrafts tire, golf and tennis are too strenuous, books and pictures will almost always help. It is for this reason that we have to be so careful of the kind of reading, especially of fiction, which we put into the hands of the patients. They must be wholesome stories, anything dealing with suicide or insanity is strictly tabu, also stories which are morbid or would be apt to arouse a morbid train of thought. With these exceptions, the insane want and should have the same books which you and I read. Moreover . . . the insane are not imbeciles and they are not children, and they resent when they are treated as such, just as much as you and I would . . . they do not want kindergarten stories, they are as interested in what is going on in the world and the keeping up with the times as any one."²⁵

²² Dr. Max E. Witte, superintendent of Clarinda State Hospital. Letter of April 4, 1917.

²³ Dr. W. P. Crumbacker, superintendent of Independence State Hospital. Letter of April 5, 1917.

²⁴ Dr. C. F. Applegate, superintendent of Mt. Pleasant State Hospital. Letter of April 18, 1917.

²⁵ Edith Kathleen Jones, *American Library Association Bulletin* 6:322. 1912.

Miss Nellie Williams, librarian for state institutions in Nebraska, with headquarters in Lincoln, has made a study of the value of the library in the hospital in that city. She says:

"When I began my work, the question in my mind was as to how responsive the patients would be, of what actual help the books would become, with most of the burden of doubt on the side of their ability and desire to read. Knowing so little of the work among the insane, I began giving some individual attention to them that I might observe actual results. Having no reading room or hospital librarian at this time, I began reading aloud once a week, on both the men's and women's wards. This proved one of the most interesting experiences I ever enjoyed. I was speedily convinced that much could be done, I found the patients to be responsive and appreciative in the extreme, and the degree of their retentiveness was a surprise to me. I find them to remember the characters in a story and the last events of a day's reading much better than I myself do when I try to keep in mind from November to December the happenings of a serial.

"I find them touched by allusions which recall home life, when they will relate incidents of their earlier years. They appreciate a story with a setting familiar to them or to their antecedents. They respond to both the humor and pathos of my selections. Indeed, I am frequently astonished at the alertness of mind shown by some in their quick grasp of a rather subtle bit of humor. They are always touched by stories of child-life, and equally suspicious of stories *for* children. They are appreciative of everything you do for them—exceedingly so.

"They have their favorite authors and surprise me by the rapid rate at which they rattle off titles of authors whose appeal is strongest for them. Some are not satisfied until they have diligently exhausted the entire supply of an author, and I have often to persuade them to try some other as a substitute.

"I have been pleased that they do not confine themselves to fiction. They will listen to poetry as long as you will read. Some of them will read for themselves travel, biography, and history, though naturally this number is limited. They have a strong love for flowers and birds and some have gratified me by an interest in the nature study books which I have been adding to the libraries. The mental status of our hospital patients is low, but in spite of mental or educational lack, we have not lowered our standard in book buying and it seems to me all the more evidence of what can be done, that they read and enjoy the type of books provided.

"At the one hospital where we maintain a reading room in connection with the library, we have found both men and women eager to go. They enjoy the magazines, they are quiet and responsive. I hope to have this same plan carried out in our other hospitals for the insane."²⁸

The most convincing evidence in regard to the hospital libraries comes to the supervising librarians in letters from the patients. The report of the Nebraska library commission for 1914-16 contains extracts from a few letters as follows:

"Being a lover of good books, I have certainly appreciated the books which the nurses distribute from time to time throughout the different wards. When one can sit here in the State Hospital and read such books as the *Efficient Life*, Alice and Phoebe Cary's poems, and so on, it gives the place a sort of homey halo after all."

²⁸ Nellie Williams. Letter of April 16, 1917.

"There are several branches of the Nebraska Library and one of the most practical in its selection and use is the State Hospital Library. It is composed of current literature and many volumes from some of our best authors, extra good works. Library day for the men comes three times a week and is looked forward to with much anticipation by many on our ward. It would be regretted if we did not have a chance to make these regular trips to the library."

"Having taken pleasure in reading many books in the library here at Ingleside, I am very glad to mention my likes in regard to it. I like the books on nature most. *In God's out-doors*, *The Alps*, *The spell of the Rockies* and others I might mention. Many of the novels are so amusing that they are a great help in passing the time pleasantly. Many of the books point a moral such as *Up from Slavery* by Booker T. Washington, which shows what a man can do if he has ambition. Books may do great good. 'May blessings be on the head of Cadmus the Phoenician or whoever it was that invented books.'"

"In behalf of several inmates on 24, allow me to express our appreciation for the privilege of reading the Ingleside state library books, either historical, Biblical, or fiction as suits our moods. They indeed help us to while away many moments and instruct us when inclement weather keeps us indoors. We want to thank you for this pleasure and privilege allowed us."

"In appreciation of the reading matter, books, magazines, and newspapers furnished Ward II, I am permitted a word of praise. These literary and news advantages have been a source of great pleasure and diversion and no little fund of information during my three months sojourn here."

"As I have never read in but very few books, until I came here, on account of close confinement I began reading the book, *The price of the prairie*. Thought that I would read some for pastime and the book became very interesting to me. Also started another but have not finished it yet. I certainly enjoyed the first but can not get much interest from the latter which is *Innocence Abroad*."

"I derive much benefit from the books insomuch as they pass the time pleasantly, leave one in a happy state of mind, and give food for thought. I specially enjoy those dealing with home life, such as Grace Richmond's, Kathleen Norris, and Eleanor Porter. I also enjoy those of travel and history."

"Among the many pleasant advantages offered by this free institution, the library deserves honorable mention. Any one who is considered able is allowed to draw books and take them to his ward. Among the books which the writer has enjoyed the *Oregon trail* by Francis Parkman ranks first, as picturing the hardships of the early settler, with its fascination of style and diction which make it interesting as a novel. I also like the writings of Rev. Van Dyke in his *Little Rivers*, *Days Off*, and others vividly describing fishing and hunting trips. What a difference between the pleasure of listening to choice literature in the commodious library hall and doing all your reading in a ward, surrounded by a group of unfortunates who do not know what they say, nor how they say it, nor when. Surely the library hours are an agreeable change from the daily routine of our life of seclusion. All this is a step in the right direction, conducive to mental healing, resulting in self-control accompanied by will power."²⁷

The following quotations are from the letters which accompanied the monthly report sent to the Supervisor of Institution Libraries by a patient, who served as librarian in one of the Minnesota state hospitals:

²⁷ Nebraska Public Library Commission, *Biennial Report*, 1914-16, 131-32.

"I am trying my old method of quieting nerves through books and we find it successful. When our patients are not busy they are fighting and swearing, so yesterday (Sunday) I brought down the Bible scrap-book and a Bible, and you don't know what a pleasant time we had looking up and explaining . . . The best method of quieting the nerves is the continuous bath. However, many cases rebel and we could not keep them in without trouble. This we have in some measure overcome by the nurse reading while they are in the tub."²⁸

"I love my books, and the patients say: 'Oh, if we could stay up in the library and have you tell us more'; how they can see mentally; how I make them feel even the character. What a wonderful blessing is the story hour!"²⁹ "I have in my hall seven finely educated high school girls and they read continuously when we do not tell fortunes."³⁰

When the traveling library was to be packed, to send on to another hospital, she wrote:

"Some of our readers read late last night and up at four this morning, in order to finish their books, and I read several of the books and copied the main ideas, so they were pleased."³¹

"I have one patient learning to spell out of the old speller."³²

"To-day I have them looking at picture books. We are full to the brim with patients, and quite noisy, poor things, when they can't read."³³

"I have such a pitiful call for simple books, words of one syllable; foreigners who do want to learn."³⁴

"I know what the library has been to me and to many others. I consider the mind needs food as well as the body. What a strange bitter thing is memory, and we can only forget by fixing and feeding our minds on books whose authors have found the problem of right thinking . . . Pure and noble thoughts have their own reaction, and in our environment here deterioration sets in very quickly, for laziness and evil minds prey upon other minds, and the class of people we have here need strong character built up and clean thought."³⁵

This librarian's comment on individual books is interesting; she had several requests for *Pilgrim's Progress* but only had one copy, in French.³⁶ She says:

"*The Building of the Nations* was considered interesting and explanations and scenes of the West helped with the reading of western stories. *Mexico* helped make the cliff-dwellers a reality, and *Riders of the Purple Sage* interesting. California scenes called for Gertrude Atherton's stories."³⁷

"I have had a call for botany, astronomy, and musical books."³⁸

²⁸ Letter of April 19, 1915.

²⁹ Letter of May 1, 1915.

³⁰ Letter of May 1, 1915.

³¹ Letter of May 8, 1915.

³² Letter of May 8, 1915.

³³ Letter of May 1, 1915.

³⁴ Letter of May 8, 1915.

³⁵ Letter of September 15, 1915.

³⁶ Letter of April 19, 1915.

³⁷ Letter of September 15, 1915.

³⁸ Letter of September 15, 1915.

"Hopkinson Smith's books, Bell's, and Churchill's *Modern Chronicle* are among the most popular. *Going Some* and *White Mice* wear well. Have tried to make Björnson's books interesting, but you know they end just where they should begin."³⁹

"My girls have enjoyed Louisa M. Alcott, as I obtained *An Adventure with Hildegard Hawthorne* now beginning the first of a series of *Adventures with our favorite Heroine*, with fine photographs of the childhood home, and *Inside and out of Fruitlands*. L. M. Alcott's life, though hard and tragic, and her stories inspire any one."⁴⁰

She finds pictures, as well as books, are appreciated.

"I would much like to have as many photos as possible and a magnifying glass."⁴¹
 "I feel such pity for these foreign patients. I do try to tell them about pictures."⁴²

"I do feel so sorry for the foreigners who must be content with pictures."⁴³

"I am planning to make some short story and picture books of strong cloth and am asking friends to save me scenes and photos. The men love pictures. I was successful in obtaining a book, *Beautiful Scenes of Canada*, which has made *How Canada was Won*, more interesting."⁴⁴

At a quarterly conference of the Iowa board of control and the superintendents of the institutions, Dr. Mary Lawson Neff contributed a paper, in which she outlined a model program for a ward in a state hospital. Her plan for the library hour was as follows:

"The library hour on Tuesday morning should be used to increase to the utmost the real value of the library, and the supply of other reading matter to the hospital. Sometimes it might mean taking a group of fifteen or twenty patients to an attractive library, more often, it would mean bringing in an armful of books to the ward, talking them over, assisting the patient to select a book or reading a chapter aloud to arouse interest. It would also mean distributing liberally the extra periodicals that every state hospital can secure from the public, by making its wants known. An estimate of five magazines per year for each patient is moderate; that is, a hospital of 1,000 patients can easily absorb 5,000 periodicals per year. The pile brought in for the library hour can first be looked over, and pictures suitable for scrap books or decorative posters laid aside. Short stories for reading aloud are excellent things to have on hand and since it is difficult to find these at a moment's notice, they should be carefully preserved whenever they come to light. The pleasure of looking over a supply of reading material and culling what appeals to one's fancy is a simple, human joy, that can easily be furnished."⁴⁵

Some alienists do not hesitate to admit their firm belief in systematic reading as a direct therapeutic factor in the recovery or improvement of the mental powers. Such a position is well stated by Doctor B. F. Williams, superintendent of the Lincoln, Nebraska, Hospital for the Insane, in a letter of April 18, 1917.

³⁹ Letter of September 15, 1915.

⁴⁰ Letter of April 19, 1915.

⁴¹ Letter of May 1, 1915.

⁴² Letter of July 1, 1915.

⁴³ Letter of July 13, 1915.

⁴⁴ Letter of April 19, 1915.

⁴⁵ Mary Lawson Neff, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 16:190-91. 1914.

"One of the early and constant manifestations of mental disease is the loss of the voluntary attentive control; accompanying this loss is a corresponding loss of appreciation for the initiative processes. The development of the processes is best accomplished by the systematic exercise of the function much as the muscle is increased in power by use.

"A patient suffering from a degenerative motor disease if permitted to sit idly, will degenerate rapidly. If careful and systematic exercise is prescribed, the degenerative processes will be arrested, or a state of improvement may intervene. One of the early faculties of child-life is the faculty of imitation and imagination. The child lives in fairy-land, dwells in a life of fairy tales, deals with fairy personalities, and out of it all is developed the speculation which forms the basis of genius in after life. Throughout the entire life the individual manifests a keen appreciation of these faculties. Day-dreaming is a pastime that all enjoy. It is closely connected with creative endeavor and is stimulated by reading; therefore, to approach normal, it is highly important that normal processes be employed.

"I call to mind at this time the influence of the library upon a patient, an epileptic, a man of attainment, having occupied high positions during his life, but as a result of epilepsy has become reduced in mental power and at times of seizures is quite confused. During the interim he is prone to be introspective and retrospective. Under the influence of systematic reading, he has become interested in the institution, its operation, in other patients, and is becoming thoroughly adjusted to life in the institution.

"Patient ———, a psychopathic individual committed to this hospital, was somewhat troublesome on the ward, mischievous and gossiping. Under the influence of systematic reading, she spends her time largely in the library or reading books on the ward. Under the influence she has become tractable, cheerful, and manifests a keen interest in the institution and its problems.

"A third patient, a finished musician, suffering from a progressive type of dementia, is keenly alert to his condition and, as a patient in the hospital, would deteriorate rapidly if such things which normally occupied his time were withheld from him. But under the influence of systematic reading he has shown an arrest of the dementia. In fact, his retrogression in a private institution in an eastern state was very rapid; having been transferred to this hospital, he has not shown the progressive deterioration, in fact, there is some improvement. Whether this arrest is temporary or permanent is, of course, not yet established.

"Many patients could be tabulated who would supply interesting data. It is sufficient, however, to say that the library is an important asset. Under skillful management it supplies a long-felt need in institution life. A power for restoration, not in itself curative, but adding materially to the other influences which are brought to bear in the modern treatment of mental diseases."⁴⁶

A corroborating opinion is that of Dr. Witte, superintendent of the state hospital at Clarinda, Iowa.

"I think that a library occupies a very important rôle, much more important than simply that of amusement or a pastime, and I am convinced that it will eventually rise to the dignity of a remedial agent . . . If we should be permitted to come back in one hundred years no doubt we should find the librarian acting under the direction of a physician and occupying a very important position in the treatment of the insane, more particularly in the earlier forms of insanity, such as dementia

● * Benjamin F. Williams. Letter of April 18, 1917.

praecox and the like. The library will occupy a more important rôle in that direction than is credited to it to-day."⁴⁷

The chief value of the state hospital library, all will agree, is to provide diversion and recreation. Many of the patients carry a heavy load of dejection and worry, and are often obsessed by fancies and suspicions, to these the books are a soothing and calming influence, suggesting a happier change of thought; some are indifferent, listless, and need to be vitalized by stirring tales of mystery and adventure; others are restless, easily fatigued by any attempt at work or exercise,—for these, reading is often the only occupation upon which they can center their minds, even for brief periods. To the convalescent, the library may be a veritable blessing. "If we can not center our minds on good reading we would soon be desperate," writes such a patient. "It is sometimes hard to keep a stiff upper lip amidst so much noise and sadness."⁴⁸ The state institutions can provide few individual rooms and the loss of privacy is often keenly felt; absorbed in an interesting book, the convalescent may find isolation even in the crowded ward.

When a patient leaves the hospital, the reading habit, strengthened in the institution, will be an aid in the delicate matter of picking up the threads of the old life. He may return to share in the family worries and often to face the problem of self support. "The people to whom books mean most," says Miss Carey, supervisor of institution libraries of Minnesota, "are not the happy prosperous people, they are the poor, the lonely, and the unfortunate."⁴⁹ The public library will prove a refuge from the idly curious and the books themselves a chief factor in the necessary fight against depression.

2. THE INSTITUTION FOR THE FEEBLE-MINDED

In the discussion of the need for providing books for the wards of the state, it is probable that many would regard this as a problem which did not concern the institutions for the feeble-minded. They would ask if the feeble-minded child, for he always remains a child, is capable of enjoying books, and if the library meets any real need in the equipment of the institution. The various theories in regard to the mentality of the mental defective are enumerated by Binet and Simon, in their book, *Mentally Defective Children*.

"A defective child does not resemble in any way a normal one whose development has been retarded or arrested. He is inferior, not in degree, but in kind. The retardation of the development has not been uniform. Obstructed in one direction,

⁴⁷ Max Witte, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 13:125-26. 1911.

⁴⁸ Letter of October 9, 1915.

⁴⁹ Miriam E. Carey, *New York Libraries* 3:222. 1913.

his development has progressed in others. To some extent he has cultivated substitutes for what is lacking. Consequently such a child is not strictly comparable to a normal child younger than himself. So far as certain faculties are concerned he remains at the level of the younger child; but in respect to others he is on a level with normal children of his own age. An unequal and imperfect development is consequently his specific characteristic. These inequalities of development may vary to any degree in different subjects. They always produce a want of equilibrium, and this want is the differentiating attribute of the defective child . . . We frequently find in such children defects of speech . . . One finds in some cases peculiarities of understanding, reasoning, imagining, difficult to define, but which do not appear to have their equivalent in younger normal children, and which therefore, do not result from simple retardation of development."⁶⁰

A visitor to one of these institutions will find a school with classes from the kindergarten to the fifth, and possibly the sixth, grade; half the time being generally spent in industrial work. The rooms are decorated with attractive drawings made by the children; there are calendars where the birds are listed as they arrive and the first flowers are recorded; one class may be engaged in a competition to see which side can add figures more quickly; another is carefully writing sentences on the board; a geography class is talking about Chicago and the states from which its imports of beef, grain, lumber, and metals are brought. There must be patient teaching, often repeated, also a variety of devices for holding the attention, as few of the children can progress beyond the fourth grade. It is in the music and reading classes that one finds the greatest interest, for the feeble-minded love to sing and to read, and their memories are practically as good as those of normal children. One who listens to the stories as they are read or told in the class, is not surprised to see the interest which the children take in the library. At the Indiana School for Feeble-minded Youth, there is an excellent library. Dr. George S. Bliss, the superintendent, writes:

"I personally regard the library in a school of this class as of very great value. Our inmates use it very largely and very regularly during the winter season. Some of the children read as many as ten, fifteen, or twenty books during the season, and all of them who are able to use it get very great benefit from the opportunity."⁶¹

At the Nebraska Home for Feeble-minded, the library has made a specialty of finely illustrated editions of children's books.

Miss Margaret McLean, principal of the school department at the Minnesota School for Feeble-minded and Colony for Epileptics, says of their library:

"There is absolutely no other one thing that adds to the happiness of our children, and aids in their discipline, as the library does. They are solely responsible for the care of the books issued to them, and it is rare indeed that a book is lost or mistreated

⁶⁰ Alfred Binet and Th. Simon, *Mentally Defective Children*, 13-14.

⁶¹ George S. Bliss. Letter of April 30, 1917.

by the one to whom it is issued. I wish I had 10,000 books for them . . . We have added books slowly; for this reason they are all read, and seem like old friends to the children. When a book that they are especially fond of begins to show that it is beyond repairing, petitions begin to come in, to 'please put ——— on your next estimate.' In some of the classes where the children are too small to read, the attendant draws books and many happy hours are spent at her knee, listening to the beloved fairy tale."⁵²

In this institution the books are drawn out by the children and taken from the library room. The teacher decides when a child is able to read by himself; it is a proud moment when he brings to the librarian a statement that he is ready to begin his literary adventures, for there is a ceremony to be gone through and a pledge to be signed: "I hereby promise to use the library books with care, and to return them promptly and in good condition. If I fail to do so, I agree to give up the privilege of using these books until I can learn to be more careful with them." "It is a well known fact," says Miss McLean, "that his 'library' as the children say, is the one thing that a boy will not share with his best friend. His skates, his skis, his sled, his knife, his box of fruit, his candy, his clothes off his back, even, are a friend's for the asking, but his library book, never! You see something might happen to it . . . It is seldom that one has to forfeit the privilege of the library, and never has a child who really enjoyed his books, been forced to do so the second time . . . A number of the readers keep lists of books which their friends have enjoyed and told them about, and these they will ask for first, and show great disappointment if they are out. Of course, they want the book, 'all the fellows are talking about it.'"⁵³

Another instance of the use of the books is that given by Dr. Walter E. Fernald, superintendent of the Massachusetts School for the Feeble-minded. He had sent out his first farm colony to clear some waste land at a distance from the institution; there were in the group twenty-five of the brighter boys and twenty-five of a low grade of mentality. He thus describes the value of the books in solving the problem of their leisure hours.

"A second test of the value of the colony was whether we could keep those boys, who were accustomed to institution entertainments and the life of the institution, on the top of a mountain in the country, with only boys like themselves, happy and content. That is where I found I had to have a little larger staff than I had anticipated. Each evening one assistant is detailed to help in this . . . Preferably we choose a woman to have the care of the entertainment of the boys in the evening. We have selected perhaps sixty or seventy-five volumes of boys' stories and from the beginning, every evening, a woman has read aloud a certain number of chapters. They have read book after book through and it is a settled thing now. I think these continued readings have had a great deal to do with the contentment of the boys. We have an organ and several other musical instruments, and every evening there

⁵² Margaret McLean, *Modern Hospital* vol. 6. May 1916.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

is a half hour of song. After the songs it is a settled policy to play games, cards, dominoes, and checkers."⁴⁴

The books in a library for the feeble-minded are naturally largely juvenile fiction and fairy tales, with picture books for those of younger mental age, and some travel and biography for the brighter children. Louisa M. Alcott, Ralph Henry Barbour, DuChaillu, Kirk Munroe, the *Jungle Books*,—all the children's favorites are represented.

Since there are several institutions with successful central libraries, and others where smaller collections of books in the several cottages have been found more practical, it has been proved that a certain percentage of the feeble-minded can direct their own reading, and a still greater number find enjoyment in hearing the books read aloud. The answers to a questionnaire, in regard to the libraries in these institutions, included those of eight colonies for epileptics, which reported the majority of their patients as feeble-minded. Of the thirty institutions reporting, eight had no libraries; three depended upon small collections from the state traveling libraries. The school principal wrote, in one case, "For a time we attempted quite high ideals in the carrying on of our library, but found it to be a waste of work . . . Feeble-minded children, that is the average proportion of such children, do not have an appreciation of books. They enjoy pictures and the more childish magazines—but not *books*." Dr. E. R. Johnstone, superintendent of the training school for feeble-minded, at Vineland, New Jersey, in his presidential address before the Association of Medical Officers of American Institutions for Idiotic and Feeble-minded Persons, in 1904, said: "Our association must . . . demand for the feeble-minded the education to which every child in the Union is entitled—whatsoever is best fitted for him."⁴⁵ One who has visited the library of an institution for the feeble-minded and has seen the child-like pleasure which they take in the well-used volumes is convinced that books form an important part of the education to which they are entitled.

3. THE INSTITUTION FOR DELINQUENTS

In the institution for juvenile delinquents the library can be of the greatest service,—it is necessary as an adjunct to the school, giving interest and value to the geography, history, and the English teaching; it affords a diversion which all may enjoy, and is thus an aid in maintaining order and good conduct; and, most of all, the growth of the mental powers and the desire for further knowledge lead to the development of the reading habit, which may be a powerful aid against the temptations of the future life outside the institutions. The delinquent boy has usually had very little

⁴⁴ Walter E. Fernald, *Journal of Psycho-Asiatics* 7:76. 1903.

⁴⁵ E. R. Johnstone, *Journal of Psycho-Asiatics* 8:68. 1904.

opportunity to find enjoyment in books. He is, "in a very large proportion of cases," say Miss Breckenridge and Miss Abbott, "the eldest child of a large family . . . and the great majority of these families are poor. His slight wage-earning capacity must, therefore, be utilized at the earliest possible moment at which his age and school certificate can be secured and he can become a supplementary wage-earner with the sanction of the law. The temptation to evade the law is sometimes too great to resist and the child is not only deprived of the slight educational requirement prescribed by the law, but is given perhaps, a first lesson in law breaking, by parents who swear that he is fourteen, when he and they alike know that he has not yet reached that age."⁶⁶

He is at the age of adventure—the age at which the average boy reaches out in many directions, making things, experimenting with machinery, striving to excel in sports. The delinquent boy may have had a very meagre experience during this period of his growth. Dr. William Healy, formerly director of the psychiatric institute of the Juvenile Court of Chicago, in his book on the delinquent, speaks more than once of the limited mental development of these boys.

"We have been exceedingly impressed by what we have learned concerning the paucity of mental interests of individuals who start criminalistic careers . . . These unfortunate individuals are generally unaccustomed to playing games that have interesting mental content, they rarely are found to read the type of books which leads them into constructive activity. They universally have a very slight knowledge of the modern scientific interests, such as electricity, which fairly possess the minds of more fortunate young people. Such normal activities as that of collecting objects of interest are rarely met with. It would be well if there were a more definite attempt to increase in the early school life the acquirement of such mental interests as might save many from delinquency."⁶⁷

The boys in these institutions are voracious readers; out of twenty-four reporting, fifteen institutions said that all, or nearly all, of the boys used the library. The books available for them must be interesting, for prosy, long-winded tales, or those which are childish or moralizing, will be left on the shelves. All boys are interested in stories of adventure and hunting, and those in which baseball and football are prominent themes; they like plenty of conversation in books, and cast a critical glance over the volume to see if there are many unbroken pages. They will read biography and history, especially that of our own nation, but both must be picturesque to attract them; they are interested in travel, especially if it contains the spice of adventure. Books and magazines which tell of aeroplanes, automobiles, motor boats, are interesting to all boys; those which contain directions for making kites, bird houses, etc., are always in demand. The books on

⁶⁶ S. P. Breckenridge and Edith Abbott, *The Delinquent Child and the Home*, 131.

⁶⁷ *The Individual Delinquent*, 297, 300.

animals are very popular; perhaps a scientist may now and then be lost to the world, because people seldom encourage a boy's love of collecting, or his careful observation of birds, moths, butterflies, and insects.

There is another side of the boy's nature which is unfolding at this time, for it is an age of emotional growth. He is a hero-worshipper, though he lets no one suspect it, and he lives the life of the great men of whom he reads; courage, self-sacrifice, honor, steadfastness, all are appreciated by the boy, quite as much as by the man, and he has the sincere desire to show such conduct under similar circumstances. This is the age at which the older boys begin to take an interest in love stories, and they too often find sordid tales which destroy the high ideals of their dreams.

The boy who leaves the school may look back upon it as the place where a new world opened to him, where he, for the first time, had a genuine opportunity for an education, a time for recreation, and where he might show by his conduct that he was worthy of the confidence that was reposed in him. The library may be his happiest memory, for his mind has been quickened and stimulated in many directions and he can continue this broadening interest through the books available outside. Best of all, he who had admired the bully and cheat has met new companions and shared their adventures in many lands, and has unconsciously gained a new standard of conduct. The environment outside is still the same, the gang and the crap-game are still in the city alleys, and the same indecent stories are circulated in the country hamlet; if he has learned how to work and how to play, and has the unfailing resource of books, he need not be driven in desperation to the companionship of those who will drag him down.

The delinquent girl affords a special problem, due to the fact that her offense is usually one for which society will ostracize her. "In such reports of delinquency as are available," says Katherine R. Williams, a member of the Wisconsin State Board of Control, "one finds that the major per cent of women and girl offenders are sentenced for offenses against public morality and decency. Of a total of 179 girl offenders, reported upon in the *Study of Juvenile Delinquency and Dependency in Los Angeles in 1912*, over 87 per cent were guilty of such offenses, leaving 13 per cent guilty of larceny, burglary, assault, etc. Dr. Davis estimates that 66 per cent of the women serving sentences for the same time were offenders against public morals, while 34 per cent were sentenced for offenses against property or persons."⁵⁸

As in the case of the delinquent boy, she comes often from a poor or broken home, where the parents are separated, or one or both are dead, or there are other conditions which make for instability or bad conduct. She learns at the school the home arts, cooking, sewing, house-furnishing, and

⁵⁸ Katherine R. Williams, *American Prison Association Proceedings*, 1914, 350-51.

often, in addition, something of agriculture, gardening, dairying, poultry and beekeeping, and even carpentry and cement work. If she returns to her own family, she will find many of the old associations unchanged. If she goes to a new environment to seek employment, the problems of adjustment are serious ones; she has few points of contact with the new life and must be slow in making friends, lest inquiry be made into her past: she is lonely, missing the community life at the cottage, where occupations were shared and leisure time did not drag. Recreation is a problem now, for there is little pleasure in the theatre or in walking, without a companion, and games can not be played alone. A love for books now becomes not only a pleasure, but a great protection, reading is almost the only recreation which she can enjoy by herself, the public library is open during her leisure hours and the books are free for her to enjoy. Here is a community institution to which she may go, a reputable place, lighted, well-supervised, where she will be protected from the advances of undesirable associates, and where her presence will attract no comment.

The girl who goes from the institution to a home of her own is sure to find that house-furnishing and housekeeping are not ends in themselves. A stable home is founded, not alone on a clean house and wholesome meals, but on the intelligent companionship of husband and wife, parents and children; there is a need for mental interests and the stimulation of intellectual growth. The mother who can help her children with their lessons, who becomes a leader in her own community, is the one who is making the most of every opportunity to improve herself.

The main purpose of the libraries in institutions for delinquents is to create and encourage a love for good books. As it is our hope that the delinquent shall not, in turn, become the recidivist and the adult prisoner, so we must strive lest the mental vacuity, which, as Dr. Healy says, is so often the characteristic of those who come before the juvenile court, shall also distinguish them as they leave the institution for the life outside. It is a task which is the special problem of the library, supplementary to the work of the school. "The key note to success of educational effort," says Dr. Healy, "is the offering of such material as will arouse healthy mental interests and add to healthy mental content. The mere giving of formal education, as such, affords hardly any part of this solution."⁵⁹ It is therefore discouraging to find that in 1916, out of thirty-one of these institutions, nine stated that they had no library and fifteen had made no book purchases during the past year, one of them none in nine years.

4. THE REFORMATORY*

The term reformatory is used to describe an institution for the younger adult or first term offenders, and sometimes that for women prisoners. A

⁵⁹ *The Individual Delinquent*, 127-28, 175.

large percentage is sent there for the crimes of grand larceny, burglary, and forgery. Their offences are, therefore, those for which they might be committed to prisons, had not the state segregated them in separate institutions, in order that they might not come in contact with older and supposedly more hardened criminals, and that during their incarceration they might receive further training. It is usual to require that half the day should be spent in school and half in industrial work. The school grading of these offenders is more difficult than in the school for delinquents, for although they are all past the grammar school age, very many must be classified in the lower grades. At the meeting of the American Prison Association in 1914, Dr. Edith R. Spaulding, resident physician of the Massachusetts Reformatory for Women, presented the results of a study of 400 women prisoners, whose average age was 27.4 years.

"Of the 400 women 21.1 per cent (nearly a quarter) had not progressed beyond the primary grades; 54.6 per cent had not progressed beyond the sixth grade in the grammar school; while 96.3 per cent had stopped their education somewhere in the grammar school . . . Nearly one quarter of the total number are ready for advanced work, while over 45 per cent need the most elementary training in the 'three R's'."⁶⁰

A study of the report of the Minnesota State Reformatory for 1914-16, shows that 569 prisoners averaged 22.19 years of age; 23.57 per cent were from 19 to 20 years; and of 387 in school, 40.8 per cent were in the first three primary grades.⁶¹ Under these circumstances, it is not easy to make school work attractive to young offenders, who, with few exceptions, have been wage-earners before their commitment. The part which the library can play as a supplement to the class work, and as a disciplinary and reformatory agent, is recognized by the officials; it is usually placed in charge of the school director, or one of the school teachers. The Director of Education of the Washington State Reformatory says:

"It is part of the scheme of the Director of Education to give instruction to young men in the matter of getting the most good out of what they read. A prisoner must think. Books are the best possible aid to right thinking . . . It should be regarded as a plain duty of the state to furnish each prisoner with a good working library. The same amount of money could not be invested to a better purpose."⁶²

Similar testimony is given by Mr. Bert E. Merriam, psychologist and educational director of the New Jersey State Reformatory:

"I believe that it [the library] should be the center of the whole institution, it should be the best thing that there is, the show place, if you wish to call it that . . . there should be no difference between a library here and one in the city or the town. Practically none of our inmates have ever frequented the public library. To those who will profit by it, there can be no greater service than to teach them the habit

⁶⁰ Edith R. Spaulding, *American Prison Association Proceedings*, 1914, 366, 368.

⁶¹ Minnesota Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1914-16, 192, 194.

⁶² *New York Libraries* 4:146-47. November, 1914.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF REFORMATORY LIBRARIES, 1915-16*

| | INMATES | EMPLOY- EES | ANNUAL APPROPRI- ATION | PUR- CHASED | DONATED | ADDED BY BINDING | TOTAL VOLUMES | CIRCU- LATION | PER CENT OF READERS | PER CENT FOREIGN | STATE TRAVEL- ING LIBRARY |
|--------------------------|---------|----------------|------------------------------|----------------|---------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| Indiana..... | 1,330 | 80 | \$ 1,000 | 500 | 100 | 200 | 10,892 | 168,750 | 100 | | |
| New York (Elmira)..... | 1,103 | 137 | 400-500 | 300-400 | | | 6,000 | 83,306 | | | |
| Kansas..... | 1,372 | 43 | 500-1000 | 350 | | | 4,000 | | | | |
| Iowa..... | 770 | 100 | 550 | 300 | 10 | | 8,000 | 120,000 | 85 | | |
| New York (Napanoch)..... | 450 | 57 | 120 | 250 | 100 | 200 | 2,500 | 9,000 | all | | |
| Michigan..... | 638 | 45 | 300 | 200-300 | 50 | None | 2,496 | 50,000 | 90 | | |
| Ohio..... | 1,300 | 70 | 300 | 214 | 40 | 30 | 3,243 | 72,000 | all | | |
| Illinois..... | 925 | 90 | 500 | 100 | few | | 12,000 | 49,423 | all | | |
| Nebraska (Women)..... | 483 | 9 | 85 | 75 | | none | 291 | | 90 | | |
| Kentucky..... | 1,513 | 65 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 300 | 1,800 | 31,300 | 75 | | |
| Minnesota..... | 619 | 37 | 550 | | | | 2,899 | 39,804 | 80 | | |
| Washington..... | 440 | 94 | | | 700 | | 4,000 | 26,276 | 80 | | |
| Wisconsin..... | 310 | 45 | varies | 1,200 | few | few | 1,200 | 10,400 | 66 | 25 | |
| New York (Bedford)..... | 400 | 80 | none | none | 300 | none | 1,200 | 5,000 | 80 | 20 | |
| Connecticut..... | 256 | 45 | none | none | 150 | none | 2,600 | 7,500 | 70 | 10 | 100 vols. |
| Oklahoma..... | 383 | 56 | none | none | | none | 1,200 | 2,000 | 90 | | |
| Colorado..... | 140 | 22 | none | none | | none | 500 | | † | | |
| New Jersey (Women)..... | 72 | 13 | none | none | 50 | none | 75-100 | 1,500 | 25 | 50 | few |
| New York (Albion)..... | 233 | 53 | none | none | | none | | | 80 | | 100 vols. |

* Arranged in order of purchase.

† All who read.

of going to the library to browse around, and feel that it is a good place . . . The pleasantest room in our institution is the School Library."⁶³

With the exception of the library of the Iowa state prison, there is, to the writer's knowledge, no other which can show a use of the book collection, comparable to the record of the Indiana State Reformatory at Jeffersonville. It is thoroughly organized, catalogued, and efficiently administered. In 1916, the Superintendent of Schools stated that 100 per cent of the inmates used the library of 10,892 volumes; the figures of circulation for the year being 83,191 book issues and 85,559 magazines, a total issue of 168,750. This institution has a bindery, and 200 volumes, chiefly magazines, are added yearly by binding. It has an annual appropriation of \$1,000 for the library, of which approximately \$500 is spent for books.⁶⁴

The effect of a definite and regular appropriation upon the growth and use of the reformatory library, is well illustrated by the preceding table compiled from the replies of nineteen reformatories, received in 1916.

5. THE PRISON

The prison library problem is not one of readers, but of books to supply the demand. In spite of the dead-wood gathered from attics and from Sunday-school libraries,—the out-of-date religious books, and the moral tales,—the prisoners' reading is far in excess of the circulation statistics of other libraries. The table on page 26, compiled from information received in 1916, includes figures from all the institutions which sent fairly complete returns.

The prisons do not seem to vary greatly, either as to the number of the population, nor the size of the book collections; the only library of over 10,000 volumes is that of Joliet, Illinois, which consists of 33,000 volumes, in the main well selected. An investigation of the catalogues shows a very real difference in the proportion of readable books. Many list the hymn books, the school texts, the old theological books, and the modern literary wall-flowers, known to the book trade as "plugs." A few libraries have been reorganized, the unreadable and worn-out books discarded, and good fiction, travel, and biography added, as well as books on the technical trades. It has been the universal experience of those interested in choosing books for prisoners, that the men tire of fiction and ask for something of more permanent value. There is a special need for books which will provide the opportunities which the prison school is as yet not able to give.

In California and in Kansas, many men are taking university courses by correspondence; some of the correspondence schools offer special rates to prisoners, and hundreds of men are availing themselves of this opportunity.

⁶³ Bert E. Merriam, *American Prison Association Proceedings*, 1913, 171-72.

⁶⁴ Questionnaire. 1916.

COMPARATIVE TABLE OF PRISON LIBRARIES, 1915-16*

| | INNATES | EMPLOY- EES | ANNUAL APPROPRI- ATION | PUR- CHASED | DONATED | ADDED BY BINDING | TOTAL VOLUMES | CIRCULA- TION | PER CENT OF READERS | PER CENT FOREIGN |
|-----------------------------------|---------|----------------|------------------------------|----------------|---------|------------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Illinois..... | 1,730 | | none | 200 | 1,100 | 50 | 33,000 | 60,000 | 95 | 27 |
| Ohio..... | 1,933 | | 500 | none | 30 | none | 9,000 | 67,374 | 40 | |
| Federal Prison (Leavenworth)..... | | | 500 | 300-500 | 30 | 15 | 8,600 | 75,000 | 35 | |
| Missouri..... | 2,643 | 123 | 500 | 100+ | none | none | 8,000 | 64,480 | 60 | 45 |
| New York (Auburn)..... | 1,658 | 165 | 200 | 200 | none | none | 8,000 | 5,000 | 75 | 50 |
| Minnesota..... | 1,029 | 150 | 750 | 350 | few | 159 | 7,250 | 68,742 | 80 | |
| Indiana..... | 1,300 | | 500 | 400 | 70 | none | 6,500 | 68,600 | 80 | |
| Iowa..... | 664 | 98 | 500 | 400 | 75 | few | 6,240 | 101,084 | 80 | |
| Colorado..... | 821 | | 500 | 150 | 500 | 300 | 5,700 | 250 per day | 50+ | |
| New York (Clinton)..... | 1,400 | | 500 | 500 | few | 300 | 5,100 | 145,600 | all | |
| Maryland..... | 1,000 | | 200 | varies | 250 | 500-600 | 5,000 | 45,000 | 75 | |
| Michigan..... | 994 | 102 | 200 | 200 | none | 500 | 4,500 | 55,000 | 90 | 20 |
| New Hampshire..... | 245 | 24 | 212 | 270 | none | none | 4,380 | 28,400 | 70 | |
| Nebraska..... | 380 | 42 | 100 | 100 | 50 | none | 3,603 | 27,463 | 80 | |
| California (Repress)..... | 1,267 | 106 | 120 | 50 | few | none | 3,500 | 26,000 | 65 | |
| North Dakota..... | 290 | 60 | 120 | 50 | few | none | 3,415 | 8,027 | 85 | |
| New Mexico..... | 420 | 35 | 50 | 75 | all | none | 1,500 | 3,500 | 33 | |
| Vermont..... | 240 | 21 | 50 | none | | none | 900 | 4,200 | 30 | |
| Arkansas..... | 1,200 | 30 | none | none | | | 500 | 1,000 | | |

* Arranged by size of book collection.

They need books of reference and in many cases have had to buy them personally. The papers prepared for the Chautauqua circles and similar organizations are on topics for which a well-chosen library can provide material. The prison population is a shifting one; most of the men are soon to go out into the world again to take up the responsibilities of life, and they need every aid in preparing themselves for earning an honest living.

Since these men are able to receive benefit from books, for a majority have been through the common schools, and since they are everywhere desirous of reading, it would seem a short-sighted policy to refuse to provide a sufficient quantity of good books. The evening hours are free for study in most prisons, and reading would seem to be the most approved way of spending the long hours of Sunday, when the men are locked in the cells; the galleries where the prisoners are busy with their books are not those in which discipline is a difficult question.

An actual experience of some years in following the reading of prisoners, has shown that the chief benefit from books lies, not in the information they may provide, but in their power to furnish the mind with wholesome thoughts. To quote Dr. Healy again:

"Another condition to be vastly deplored while society is detaining the offender may be simply named mental vacuity. What can any one conceive to be the mental content of prisoners when they are unoccupied? . . . No greater proof can be conceived of the truth of the empty mind being the devil's workshop, than what we have learned to be the thoughts brewed during the unoccupied moments of prison life."⁶⁶ . . . "In nearly all people visual memory and visual imagery play the most dynamic part in mental life, it is the thing seen which is presented again in consciousness with the greatest force and probably the greatest frequency. The strength of the powers of visualization is to be deeply reckoned with when considered with springs of criminality . . . The individual with paucity of healthy mental instincts is much more likely to be obsessed by the recurrence of imagery of some experience, which in a more healthfully occupied mind would be almost a negligible influence for the bad. . . Mental vacuity permits the growth of pernicious imagery. I am inclined to think that here is one of the greatest psychological principles that can be used in the effective treatment of the offenders."⁶⁶

If the prisoner has gone through the usual county jail experience, he has known the worst of evil company; he finds in the prison, in spite of the discipline, an opportunity to learn of the records and methods of more notorious criminals. In the shop or in his cell, his thoughts are active, the old life is lived over again and the new life beyond the walls is pictured during most of his waking hours. He needs books to turn his thoughts into other channels,—tales of adventure, histories of pioneer days and trail-making. The salacious novel, with its suggestive descriptions and false standards, is not good mental food for the man who needs to learn self-control. A study of the library catalogues of twenty-three American

⁶⁶ *The Individual Delinquent*, 224.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 233.

prisons, made in 1912, showed that many books which were considered improper for circulation by the public libraries had been purchased for the penitentiaries.⁶⁷

The library is but one of the reformatory agencies of the prison,—the school, the correspondence courses, the reading circles, and the chapel services all have their place. Not every man is reformable, but each is in some degree educable. Few states provide for any further schooling than brief courses for illiterates, and the men must depend for their further improvement upon general reading, as is shown by the use made of these libraries. It was Lombroso's belief that the criminal was made more dangerous by education, but the American officials of to-day do not agree with him. Warden Wells of the Kentucky state prison, voices the opinion of most of them:

"A good prison library is worth much, if it circulates . . . We have but little patience with the idea that the reading of the daily papers will hurt anybody. One of the very best things that the management can do, is to create and foster the *reading habit*. The intelligent prisoner is generally the good prisoner, the low and vicious are generally the ones who are steeped in ignorance. There may be some exceptions, but this is clearly the rule. Let the electric light burn until nine o'clock, see to it that each prisoner can read well, furnish him with good literature, let them subscribe for a daily paper, and you have done much toward good discipline—finally, good citizenship."⁶⁸

6. THE INSTITUTION FOR INEBRIATES, THE SANATORIUM FOR TUBERCULOSIS, THE ORTHOPEDIC HOSPITAL

A few states have established institutions for inebriates, where they may be under control and receive custodial and medical care. A well-chosen library is a valuable influence in controlling the restlessness and dissatisfaction of inmates. If the reading habit is a safeguard within the institution, it is a much greater one after the patient has returned to the life outside. "The labor," says Dr. Freeman of Minnesota, "is to reëducate, to strive to form a new character, to encourage a habit of sobriety instead of drunkenness, to teach him work to occupy himself, to obtain for him a new outlook on life, and to teach him his duty to himself, his family, and his neighbors."⁶⁹ There is the same need for education and diversion in the new state farms for vagrants and short-term offenders.

The need for books in the sanatorium for tuberculosis does not require elaboration; many of the patients are in bed, and others, through the nature of their disease, can not engage in exercise. Reading is almost the only diversion open to them. Twelve of these institutions reported that

⁶⁷ Florence R. Curtis, *Survey* 29:323-25. December 14, 1912.

⁶⁸ A. J. G. Wells, *American Prison Association Proceedings*, 1914, 74.

⁶⁹ Minnesota State Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1914-16, 278.

they had made no book purchases during the years of 1915-16; the majority depend almost entirely upon donations. As the patients have generally completed a common school education and an average of 65 per cent are reported as readers, the annual book purchases of many of these institutions seem very inadequate; several say that they have many calls for books which they can not furnish. People who appreciate good books will not long be satisfied with those which come as chance gifts, and those who at first read mainly for diversion will soon demand something beside light magazines and fiction; a large book collection is needed when so many hours of the day are spent in reading. Dr. H. V. Scarborough, superintendent of the state sanatorium of Iowa, has solved the problem of a book fund for his institution: "No special appropriation was asked for this year, since it was ruled by the board at my suggestion, that the buying of books was a matter of treatment at this institution and should come out of our support fund. Previously we had allowed about \$260 for each biennial period. I think this sum should be increased by 50 per cent, which would make it more clearly sufficient for an institution of this size and kind."¹⁰ There were in 1916, 170 patients in the Iowa state sanatorium.

It is the purpose of the orthopedic hospital to send the children out again, after medical care which has, as far as possible, removed their physical handicap, and after both educational and industrial training have helped them to be self supporting. Here the library is of importance, not only in supplementing the work of the school, but in helping to make the hours in bed pass quickly and happily. One of the most attractive library rooms in the country is that of the Minnesota State Hospital for Crippled and Deformed Children. Miss McGregor, the superintendent, says of it:

"The library is the cultural center and has a definite place in our school work. Each child has four regular library periods each week and the work done during these periods is not optional. The attractive room and beautiful books and pictures afford an incentive that no one ever resists . . . Story-telling has been a part of the library course for two years . . . The children give programs, appropriate to the special holidays, and no holiday goes by without special recognition."¹¹

7. THE HOME FOR SOLDIERS, THE SCHOOL FOR DEPENDENT CHILDREN, THE SCHOOLS FOR THE BLIND AND THE DEAF

The homes for soldiers and sailors, and their wives and widows, have been established for some years and possess book collections of fair size. Few of these institutions are now purchasing books in any quantity, due probably to the fact that a majority of the readers are at an age when they prefer magazines and newspapers; many have excellent book collections.

¹⁰ H. V. Scarborough. Letter of March 31, 1917.

¹¹ Minnesota State Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1914-16.

The schools for dependent children, and those for the blind and the deaf, are three types of educational institutions which combine both the home and the school. The chief work of the children's homes is to give intelligent care, until their charges can be placed permanently outside the institution. They attempt there, not only to bring the backward children up to grade, but to give them the interests which are best expressed in the love for books and pictures. In the Minnesota State Public School, the cheerful library room is the center of the educational work, and liberal provision is made for the hours that may be spent there. Bird pictures, or those which tell some historical story, are hung above the low book cases; there are illustrated editions of the classic tales for children, and they collect magazine pictures to make scrap books upon some subject suggested by the teacher or the librarian. The story hour is popular here as elsewhere. The pledge of the Library League, with its childish signatures, hangs upon the wall, that all may be reminded that the books are in the special care of each child who uses them. "It is impossible to estimate the value of the library to this school," says Mr. Merrill, the superintendent, "connected as it is with the cultural interests of which it is the center."⁷²

It has been the policy of the administrative officers of the schools for the blind and deaf to develop the libraries to the largest extent possible. In the schools for the blind, the money expended is much greater than in any other institutions; the special books for the blind are costly, and the ink-print library usually duplicates the raised-point books. The United States Government gives free mail carriage to books for the blind, and some of the larger institutions send reading matter throughout the state, and even beyond its borders. The deaf must gain their vocabulary word by word, so the books must be carefully chosen; though they must be fairly simple, they should not be childish, or they will lack interest and value. The selection of the library demands a wide knowledge of books, as well as of the special needs of the readers. When the realm of books is opened to the blind or the deaf child, the narrow boundaries of his world recede before him day by day.⁷³

⁷² Galen A. Merrill. *Lecture, 1917.*

⁷³ The schools for the blind and the deaf prefer to be listed with the educational, instead of the charitable, institutions of the state.

CHAPTER III

HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT FOR STATE SUPER- VISION OF INSTITUTION LIBRARIES

The history of the movement for libraries in institutions, organized and administered along the lines of modern library science, shows that the first concerted effort for efficient service was made by the Board of Control and the superintendents of the various institutions of Iowa, in 1905. Book collections had existed in the various institutions of the country for many years before this, and an occasional library had been classified and adequately catalogued, but there had been little appreciation of their value on the part of the institution officials, and, on the part of librarians, almost no attempts to offer assistance in organization and book selection. In New York, and perhaps in other states, a few institutions had occasional deposits of books from the traveling libraries. In 1897, the New York State Library published a list of books for insane hospital libraries.

In 1898, the Iowa Board of Control was created by act of the legislature; two of the three members of the board were, at the time of their appointment, trustees of the state library. Shortly after his appointment, one of them wrote: "We seek to provide each institution with a good working library suited to the needs of its inmates. It is the policy for the board to expend, as far as the finances admit, any amount of money necessary or proper for the development of the libraries in all the state institutions." In 1903, an act was passed under which the visitors' fees of the state prisons were set aside as a library or book fund for all the institutions. This was later amended, and the fund restricted to the use of prisons.

In 1900, the Library Commission was created, and Miss Alice S. Tyler appointed its executive officer. At the quarterly conference of the superintendents and the Board of Control, in June, 1905, Mr. Johnson Brigham, the state librarian, read a paper on *Libraries for State Institutions*,¹ in which he gave the results of a study of the reports of the various institutions of the country, in an attempt to gain information regarding their book collections. At the conference of October, 1905, Miss Tyler presented a paper, *A Working Library versus a Collection of Books*.² In this she suggested the appointment of a librarian to have charge of the libraries in the Iowa institutions. These superintendents had found by experience that a library, however well selected and equipped, would not run itself; it was not difficult to convince them of the need for a consistent policy of administration. By a unanimous vote it was decided to create the office of Supervising

¹ Johnson Brigham, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 7:326-49.

² Alice S. Tyler, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 7:447-53.

Librarian of the State Institutions.³ The duties of this supervisor, as discussed at the meeting, were: to pay regular visits to the libraries; to introduce a uniform system of classification, establish permanent records, and provide statistics of accession and of circulation; and to stimulate reading through the selection of books in each institution. In naming the first and the last duties of the supervising librarian they initiated a new form of library service to the institutions. It would have been possible to devote a sum of money to the classification of the libraries and the installation of permanent records; by the requirement of regular visits and expert selection of the books for each type of readers, they provided for a continuous and intelligent development of the libraries.

It was the desire of the president of the board, Judge G. S. Robinson, that the office of supervising librarian should be created by a special act, but it was considered undesirable at the time to urge such action. The method finally decided upon, was the appointment of a librarian who should be paid by each institution on the basis of the time actually spent in its service. Miss Miriam E. Carey, librarian of the public library of Burlington, Iowa, was appointed supervising librarian, beginning her duties in March, 1906.

The work was so thoroughly organized and so successfully administered under her supervision, that it was placed upon a permanent basis, and endured for a period when there was no one in charge of the libraries. In January, 1909, Miss Carey went to the Minnesota Library Commission as library organizer. From this time, there was no supervising librarian in Iowa until, in 1911, at the request of the superintendents, Miss Tyler, the secretary of the Library Commission, was asked to recommend a woman to the board of control. Miss Julia A. Robinson, at that time acting secretary of the Kentucky Library Commission was appointed and entered upon her duties in January, 1912. In September, 1913, upon the resignation of Miss Tyler to accept the directorship of the Library School of Western Reserve University, Miss Robinson succeeded her as secretary of the Library Commission. Miss Eliza E. Townsend was appointed supervising librarian, resigning in 1916. In 1917, Miss Grace Shellenberger was appointed to the position.

When Miss Carey went to the position with the Minnesota Library Commission, announcement was made that the advice and assistance which the commission gave to the public libraries of the state were at the service of those in the institutions. Miss Carey visited the institutions, organized several of the collections, and edited a column of institutional library notes in the monthly bulletin of the commission. In September, 1913, the Board of Control created the position of Supervisor of Institution

³ *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 7:515.

Libraries and appointed her to the office. She has thus had the responsibility of organizing the work in the first two states to place it under a special officer. The Minnesota plan differs in some respects from that of Iowa, where the supervising librarian, who had no central headquarters, spent her time between the several institutions. In Minnesota the work was centralized, first in the office of the library commission, and later in that of the board of control, and instead of payments for services being made directly by each institution, a monthly salary was named; this was, under a later plan, charged back, *pro rata*, at the end of the year. There was also provided a central office, where attention might be given to lines of work for the benefit of the institutions as a whole. Iowa had a considerable advantage over Minnesota, far outweighing that of the central headquarters, in the fact that it was, from the first, a settled policy, both of the Board of Control and of the superintendents, that a sufficient book fund should be appropriated yearly for each of the institutions.

The third state to make provision for the institution libraries was Nebraska. In 1911, through the vigorous efforts of Miss Charlotte Templeton, secretary of the Library Commission, the legislature voted a considerable increase in the appropriation of the commission, in order to provide books for the state institutions and the services of a librarian to have charge of the work. Miss Florence Waugh was appointed Librarian of State Institutions, Miss Nellie Williams succeeding her in 1916. The Nebraska plan was radically different from that adopted by either Iowa or Minnesota. The institutions provided library rooms and equipment wherever possible, and coöperated with the commission in furthering the work; the commission provided books and periodicals, amounting in 1914-16 to \$2,250, money for binding, printing, and supplies, and for the salary and traveling expenses of the supervising librarian. The commission office was the headquarters of the librarian of state institutions.

To summarize briefly: in Iowa, the work was under the direction of the Board of Control, and the salary of the supervising librarian was divided *pro rata*; the money secured from visitor's fees to the reformatory and the prison was at first a general book fund,—later, each of these penal institutions used a certain amount of its gate receipts for book purchases, and each of the other institutions included a special book fund in its budget. In Minnesota, the Library Commission arranged that the organizer should divide her time between the public and the institution libraries. The Board of Control later took over the work, creating the office of Supervisor of Institution Libraries. The salary and traveling expenses of this officer were at first paid from the contingent fund of the Board of Control, under a later policy this was charged back to the institutions at the end of the year. There was no settled policy in regard to including a book fund in the annual

budgets of the institutions, this being left to the judgment of the superintendents. The Nebraska Library Commission furnished, from its fund, books and supplies for each institution, and provided the services of a librarian; the work was thus centralized at the commission office.

There are several states in which the supervision of the institution libraries might be assumed by the Library Commissions, or a similar agency, without additional legislation or board action. What is lacking in these states is a sufficient fund on the part of the commission to pay for the services of the supervising librarian, and, on the part of the institutions, a regular appropriation for books. Though the satisfactory solution of the problem is the appointment of such a supervisor, it is not necessary to wait until such action be taken. The Library Commission exists for the purpose of aiding the libraries of the state by friendly visits, by help in book selection and in cataloguing, and by the lending of books from the traveling libraries. The institutions have been slow to avail themselves of the aid which is freely offered them. In some of the states, traveling libraries and gifts of books have been accepted; in some, a few of the libraries have been classified and catalogued and the methods of recording book circulation have been installed. Some have sought advice in regard to discarding books not suitable for their use and in the selection of new books suitable for their purpose. The New York State Library published, in 1897, a list of books for insane hospitals, followed, in 1917, by the first section of a list of books for prison libraries. In Oregon, where almost all the institutions are in the capital city, the state librarian has undertaken to provide reference books and the more solid reading, thus making possible larger purchases for the institution libraries. The size and excellent condition of the institution libraries of Indiana bear witness to the help received from their Library Commission; eleven of the libraries have been classified, others have had frequent help in book selection and book buying, four of the institutions, in 1916, employed teacher-librarians, who had received training in a library summer school.

CHAPTER IV

THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE INSTITUTION LIBRARY

1. THE BOOK COLLECTION AND THE BOOK FUND

That the book collections of the institutions should vary greatly, both in size and quality, is to be expected from the fact that few, proportionately, have been the result of a progressive policy of acquisition and administration; averages for all the institutions of a certain class are therefore of little value. Of those which sent replies to a questionnaire in 1916, the following have no libraries: eight insane hospitals; eight institutions for the feeble-minded; nine for delinquent boys and girls; one reformatory; five prisons; nine homes for soldiers; one home for colored children had no funds for books, but the superintendent's library was open to the children for an hour each day. As Iowa is the only state which has carried out, for a number of years, the policy of annual appropriations for the purchase of books for each institution, it will be interesting to note the size of these collections.

IOWA STATE INSTITUTIONS¹

| | ADDED IN BIENNIUM | WITHDRAWN | TOTAL VOLUMES |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1905..... | 5,034 | | 41,909 |
| 1908..... | 10,825 | 1,008 | 50,640 |
| 1910..... | 3,206 | 630 | 48,532 |
| 1912..... | 3,712 | 5,914 | 42,135 |
| 1914..... | 5,334 | 5,376 | 40,255 |
| 1916..... | Not yet published | | |

It is evident that the large number of books discarded each year has prevented any perceptible increase in the size of the Iowa libraries. This is accounted for by two facts: first, the older libraries are more apt to contain many books which should be withdrawn, both because, in the early years, they accepted whatever was sent them as donations, and because there was no consistent policy for book selection and purchasing; secondly, because some of the institutions, particularly the orphans' homes, and schools for delinquents, and the reformatory and the prison, give the books hard service and necessitate wholesale renewals. Of the 11,290 volumes withdrawn in 1910-12 and in 1912-14, over half were from the reformatory and prison libraries. It is to be expected that the number of books discarded annually will soon decrease, and a point be reached at which the accessions will exceed the annual withdrawals.

¹ *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 7:326-49.

Iowa State Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1907-8, 1908-10, 1910-12, 1912-14.

The type of institution determines whether the library for the officers and employees is included in that for the inmates. The hospitals for the insane have reference libraries for the medical staff, comprising works on general medicine and those in the special fields of psychiatry and allied subjects, as well as journals, transactions, and reports; it has not been the custom to include the volumes in this collection in the figures for the general libraries of the hospitals. A liberal supply of good reading matter can not fail to be appreciated in any institution. The problems of securing intelligent and reliable employees is one which all are facing, hence any means of furnishing desirable recreation and adding to the good spirit of the institution is cordially welcomed by the management. The official staff, as well, finds institution life confining and the community interests limited. Lectures, music, and theatres are in the cities, often beyond their reach, but books are a privilege which can be shared by all alike.

The two chief needs of the institution libraries are adequate financial support and adequate supervision. A regular annual appropriation for books is essential to proper growth and service; the libraries which have such a fund are those which can show an extensive use of the books. Here again, the figures for the Iowa institutions may be quoted, since they cover a term of years.

IOWA STATE INSTITUTIONS²

| | COLLECTIONS | CIRCULATION | AVERAGE POPULATION | EMPLOYEES | READERS |
|------|-------------|-------------|-----------------------|-----------|---------|
| 1905 | 41,909 | | 8,061 | | |
| 1908 | 50,640 | 200,151 | 9,580 | | 2,776 |
| 1910 | 48,532 | 429,652 | 8,725 | 1,404 | 3,089 |
| 1912 | 42,135 | 377,482 | 9,001 | 1,411 | 3,183 |
| 1914 | 40,255 | 520,651 | 9,309 | 1,507 | 3,668 |

CIRCULATION

1914, average circulation, 141.9 volumes per reader.

Magazines.....47.8 per cent

Fiction.....39.9 per cent

Non-fiction.....12.2 per cent

The following table gives the figures for the issues per reader of the libraries in eleven of the twenty-five largest cities of the United States, for the years 1914-15 or 1915-16. These will show a larger circulation per reader, than an average taken from all the public libraries of the country.

A difference in recording magazine circulation may affect these results in favor of the institution libraries, but not to any considerable extent. It should not be argued from these figures that the public libraries are failing

² *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 7:326-49.

Iowa Board of Control, *Biennial Report*, 1906-8, 1908-10, 1910-12, 1912-14.

to reach a proper percentage of their population, but that the inmates of the institutions have more time for reading than those outside and fewer diversions to fill their leisure hours.

| | REGISTERED READERS | VOLUMES LOANED FOR HOME USE | VOLUMES PER READER ³ |
|-------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Philadelphia..... | 165,648 | 2,730,173 | 16.4 |
| St. Louis..... | 100,717 | 1,690,037 | 16.7 |
| Boston..... | 112,199 | 1,910,320 | 17.0 |
| Cleveland..... | 163,418 | 3,023,156 | 18.3 |
| Baltimore..... | 44,929 | 696,111 | 15.4 |
| Detroit..... | 100,294 | 1,491,034 | 14.8 |
| Cincinnati..... | 101,132 | 1,660,216 | 16.5 |
| Newark..... | 62,005 | 1,194,817 | 19.2 |
| Washington..... | 47,296 | 802,998 | 16.9 |
| Seattle..... | 66,186 | 1,369,485 | 20.6 |
| Providence..... | 50,090 | 945,966 | 18.8 |

There are five ways in which the institutions at the present time can secure a supply of books for their readers. The first, and the only really satisfactory method, is the building up of a permanent collection through an annual expenditure, with possible additions of some donations which are found suitable for the purpose. The sum is not necessarily a large one, even that of fifty or seventy-five dollars, wisely expended will show results, and such results are the basis for future increase. That such a justification exists in the minds of the superintendents of Iowa is shown by the following replies to an inquiry, made in March, 1917:

| 1912-14 | ANNUAL BOOK AND MAGAZINE FUND | SHOULD BE | AVERAGE POPULATION EXCLUSIVE OF EMPLOYEES |
|------------------------------------|--|----------------------------|--|
| Cherokee State Hospital..... | \$250 | \$.50- .60 per cap. | 1,012 |
| Clarinda State Hospital..... | 250 | 300. -400. | 1,162 |
| Independence State Hospital..... | 200 | .20 per cap. | 1,171 |
| Mt. Pleasant State Hospital..... | 250 | 500. | 1,093 |
| Institution for Feeble-minded..... | | | 1,350 |
| Industrial School for Boys..... | 150 | 1.00 per cap. | 395 |
| Industrial School for Girls..... | 250 | 2.00 per cap. | 148 |
| Reformatory..... | 450 | 1.00 per cap. | 675 |
| Prison..... | | 1.00 per cap. a minimum | 529 |
| Hospital for Inebriates..... | 150 | | 174 |
| Sanatorium..... | | | 106 |
| Soldiers' Home..... | | 500. | 732 |
| Soldiers' Orphans' Home..... | | | 533 |
| School for the Deaf..... | 250 | 2.00 per cap. | 215 |

The second method of securing books is that in use by the three insane hospitals and the two asylums for the chronic insane in Minnesota. Each institution contributes an annual sum, in this case \$50, with which approximately 250 books are purchased by the supervising librarian. Twenty-five are sent to each institution in a box which may be used as a bookcase,

³ *American Library Association Bulletin*, vol. 10. Statistics of Libraries.

they are kept a month and then sent on in a regular itinerary; at the end of the fifth or the sixth month they are added to the permanent collection and a new supply is received. By this method, each hospital adds to its library fifty books each year and the patients have the opportunity of using two hundred and fifty volumes. Miss Carey says of this collection:

"As the purpose of the hospital traveling library is to provide recreation and change of thought, the books are selected with no other object in view. The collections are not educational, except incidentally, nor of special literary value. They are made up almost entirely of fiction, with any popular books on the questions of the day which may be available, and a few purely humorous books, which are always well liked by some of the patients. Additions are chosen, so far as it is financially possible, for good print and paper, illustrations, and attractive and serviceable binding."

This plan has proved practicable for other groups of institutions of the same type, such as the county sanatoria of Wisconsin. In Oregon, since most of the institutions are located in Salem, it has been possible for them to provide certain classes of books from their own funds, and to depend upon the state library for reference books and those less often called for. Since the readers in the institutions have little initiative in procuring the books they need, and must depend upon the officers and attendants, this method would probably not be successful if the state library were not in the same city.

It has been a practice in some states to depend for books upon the traveling libraries of the state library commission, but this method, except for a temporary measure, has failed to accomplish results, as shown by reports from many of the institutions. These libraries are necessarily small, since the collection is never equal to the demand from libraries, schools, and study clubs; this fact alone makes it difficult to secure books suited to the special problems of the institutions; fifty, seventy-five, and even the occasional one hundred volumes a year, can not meet the legitimate demand for reading material. In the case of one of the insane hospitals and two schools for delinquents, the institution has been designated as a branch library of a city or county system. There is, of course, a question here in regard to the adequate increase of the book collections, and the problem of purchasing books adapted to the special class of readers.

2. THE LIBRARY ROOM

When, in 1905, Mr. Johnson Brigham, state librarian of Iowa, said that it was desirable that each institution should have a central library and reading room, he spoke to a group of superintendents who were already building up good-sized book collections and had, in some instances, provided for their accommodation. To-day, Iowa, Minnesota, and Nebraska have permanent quarters for the libraries in most of the institutions, and

Indiana, at least, is not far behind them. Reading rooms in educational institutions and in those for children are in most cases considered in planning the buildings; many of the schools for delinquents have provided library rooms; some of the sanatoria for tuberculosis and the hospitals for those injured in the mines, have set aside rooms for the library. There are attractive reading rooms in several of the state insane hospitals, in addition to those in the three states mentioned.

The patient who acted as librarian in one of the Minnesota state hospitals, wrote repeatedly concerning their need for quiet reading rooms.

"Each day coming more in contact with the readers, I realize what a library means to them. It is in many instances our only soul salvation, and, were I to live long enough, I would persevere until I had a building and library, where all readers could go and sit off the wards and enjoy brain rest,—a place to read out loud and explain the books. Others can not read for fear of strained eyes or mental application."⁴

In addition to their reading rooms, the hospitals have book cases in the wards or day rooms, where a selection of attractive books may be displayed and be frequently renewed. The idea that insane patients would not read was strengthened, in most cases, in the hospitals where the same collections of uninteresting books remained on the wards for month after month.

Some institutions for delinquents, and at least one for the feeble-minded, prefer the plan of having the book shelves in the living rooms of the cottages. There are some advantages in this, if there is a good-sized central library, where the collections may be sent for frequent exchange and from which special requests may be filled. There is, however, an advantage in the atmosphere of a library room and in the possibility of browsing among the books and extending acquaintance with them. In all these institutions magazines should be freely provided for the wards or the cottage rooms.

Even the prisons may some day have reading rooms to which the trusted men are allowed to go; the Warden at the federal prison at Fort Leavenworth would welcome such a plan, and the Warden at Fort Madison, Iowa, states that one of his needs is a reading room where a hundred men might attend at night. The Warden of the workhouse and reformatory of the District of Columbia, thus describes their library room:

"A rest hall and library, one story, of a capacity for comfortably seating a hundred prisoners has been provided, with room for them to promenade from one end of the building to the other. All the prisoners are taken care of in this building after the day's work is done and they remain there until bed-time, playing checkers, reading the daily newspapers provided by the management, singing, talking, and having access to a library of 4,000 good books provided by the Public Library at Washington. This building has neither locks nor bars. We have ten paid officers to take care of these 600 prisoners."⁵

⁴ Letter of June 8, 1915.

⁵ W. H. Whittaker, *American Prison Association Proceedings*, 1915, 72.

3. THE LIBRARY SERVICE

As the term institution stands for something more than the population and the buildings, so the term library is associated with more than a collection of books and the room for housing them. Though the profession of librarianship is comparatively new, the present movement toward the certification of librarians shows that it is winning recognition, as a definite field for which general education and special training are necessary. There are to-day, in the several library schools, over 300 students, about one half of whom are college graduates, and two of the schools offer a two-year course on a graduate basis; a majority of the graduates of these schools will go to administrative positions.

The employment of a trained librarian is an admitted advantage to the public and the college library, but it may be questioned whether there is equal need for education and training on the library service of the institutions. The three chief tests of the librarian in the institutions are,—ability to select books wisely and purchase them economically; to extend the use of the library and to foster the knowledge of books and the desire for reading; to classify and catalogue the collection; and to install records which will show the rate of increase in the size of the collection and in the circulation of the books. The trained librarian knows how to expend the small book fund to the best advantage. This presupposes an acquaintance with the regular dealers in the book trade and the discounts which they are able to make to the libraries; with the opportunities for securing books by taking advantage of book bargains and seasonal sales at stock-taking time; with the publishing houses and the character of the books which they issue; with various editions of the same work and their excellence as to type, illustrations, and binding; and with the sources of supply for inexpensive pictures, to supplement the study of history, geography, literature, nature study, and mythology.

This knowledge is, nevertheless, of far less importance than that necessary for the selection of the books which shall be read. This requires a knowledge of people, as well, and the power to understand their needs and realize their point of view. The reader outside may supplement the public library by his own purchases, the inmate of the institution is restricted to the books which are already available. No education is ever broad enough to afford an adequate knowledge of the books worth while, and the librarian is, happily, a student to the end of his days of service. In the varied types of the different institutions he will find a test of his powers. The books must be readable, for while the purchase of uninteresting books may be a mistake in another library, in the small collection of the institution it is a serious fault; they must be wholesome and of good tone but not necessarily, except those for young people, of real literary merit; they must combine informa-

tion and recreation in good proportion; and, finally, the choice must be based on an insight into the special needs of the several institutions. It is possible, from the experience of those who have studied the problem, to formulate a few principles which should govern the choice of books for these libraries. The subject of book selection for the deaf and the blind, for children, for delinquents, for the feeble-minded, and for the patients in the sanatoria, has already been touched upon; the standards for selection for the insane and the prisoners may be discussed more thoroughly. In neither of these institutions should there be an effort to build up a balanced library, both scholarly and comprehensive. Miss Carey, Miss Jones, and others have found that the insane are fond of romance and adventure, an absorbing book, such as a good detective story, is of value to arouse interest and stimulate mental effort; over-emotional, morbid, or depressing books, those with religious discussions or touching upon insanity and crimes of violence, should be excluded. The humorous book should not be forced upon the despondent patient, nor will short stories find many readers, though the small book between the novel and the magazine story, is a favorite with the bed patients. Type, illustrations, and bindings should be attractive. It is interesting to note that the insane are readers of travel, biography, and history. Dr. Crumbacker of the Independence, Iowa, hospital, says: "It has been a matter of surprise with me to see the interest that has developed. With us, I think they read more history and biography than the average town or city library gives out. Of course, historical novels are largely read."⁶ Dr. Chase, of the Friends Hospital, Philadelphia, recommends a varied selection. "A well-selected library, containing books of history, travel, biography, essays, poetry, and fiction, and an assorted list of current magazines, periodicals, pictorial and daily newspapers, is very desirable for patients."⁷

The prisoner has been taken from his home and his community, to be released, in most cases, after a short term of imprisonment. He is more apt to be weak, untrained, and uncontrolled, than deliberately wicked, and the main purpose of his incarceration should be to give him every chance for improvement. Says Warden Jones, formerly of the Iowa state prison: "To those who declare the object of criminal punishment to be the protection of society from the criminal, we say the transformation of the criminal into a serviceable member of society is the only effective protection of society against him."⁸

Whatever the lack of the American prison, as to school facilities and training in trades, most of the prisons have libraries of fair size and they are thoroughly used. It is a truism that the occupations of a man's leisure

⁶ W. P. Crumbacker, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 16:341. October, 1914.

⁷ *Mental Medicine and Nursing*, 197.

⁸ N. N. Jones, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 1:518.

hours are the best test of his character and his tastes. It is unfortunate that the management should be careful to provide clean entertainments,—ball games, motion pictures, concerts, and lectures, and should regard so carelessly the worthless and often immoral books which pass freely through the cells. Fiction purchased for the prisoners should be read with them in mind, for the characters in the books are, in a real sense, companions to the readers. The books should not be colorless nor weakly sentimental, nor is the conventional happy ending desirable. These men are not innocent,—they know the facts of life; temptation, sin, and retribution are not to be covered up or hinted at, or used to point a moral. If the officials of most of the prisons would delegate to the secretary of the library commission, or to some other librarian in the state, the task of eliminating objectionable and unreadable books, and would provide funds for the purchase of good strong fiction, interesting biography, travel, history, technical books, books to aid in teaching English, and books on citizenship, they would find it an investment which paid for itself many times over, in the returns of good discipline and the promise of better citizenship.

The public librarian of the present day does not consider his most important task done when the books have been selected, purchased, and prepared for the shelves. There still remains the duty of making them living forces in the community, the delightful task of developing an interest in reading and suggesting new lines of study. For reader and librarian alike, there is the stimulus of mental growth. So, in the institution library, there is the same possibility of personal service to the readers: books must be chosen with special readers in mind; others must be encouraged to browse in new pastures; interest may be aroused by reading aloud; reading courses may be planned; and material gathered for debates or for essays, or for the teachers.

This is the work which the librarian and the teacher must share; it is the field in which the teacher-librarian has so successfully advanced the interests of the institution library; the two essential requisites are a knowledge and a love of books, and a genuine interest in the readers. Dr. Applegate of the Mt. Pleasant hospital, Iowa, comments upon the need for care in guiding the reading of the insane, and adds, "If the librarian does not know the books she is giving out, I believe she will not have much success in accomplishing good in our hospitals for the insane."⁹

Dr. A. C. Hill, inspector of prison schools in New York State, in a paper read before the American Prison Association, said of the prison librarian:

"No one in the prison has a greater responsibility upon him than the one who buys the books and puts them into the hands of prisoners. It is not a task to be lightly undertaken or carelessly performed . . . The school proper teaches the men to

⁹ C. E. Applegate, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 6:336. October, 1914.

read and gives them a start in the use of the art. Then the librarian continues the work by suggesting and providing food for the minds and imaginations . . . He has a tremendous responsibility and should be well informed, tactful, and conscientious. A trained and reliable librarian is nowhere more needed than in a prison library."¹⁰

Finally, we have the plea of a patient in one of the insane hospitals:

"We do so need soul built up here and something to start a train of good thought and cheer-up amusement. It does seem as if the state could hire a good, beautiful, strong woman to be librarian here, whose duties it would be, not alone to tend books, but go on the flats, see that the patients received books, read to them, cheer them, and provide intellectual entertainments. Each dining room could be used, have a reading hour and story hour."¹¹

Another duty of the institution librarian is the organization of the library and the installation of proper records. There is a system of classification which permits of infinite expansion without renumbering; it is, moreover, a system in general use in libraries and a familiarity with it will prove a service to one who endeavors to continue the habit of reading after leaving the institution. The essential records are: the catalogue which tells what books are in the library; the shelf list, which serves both as an inventory record and an index of subjects; the accession book, in which all volumes are entered as they are purchased; the checking file of the receipt of periodicals; and the loan record of individuals to whom books are charged out, which forms the basis for compiling statistics of circulation.

These records serve other ends as well; they show the strength and the weakness of the collection, the lines along which it should be built up; they show what books are not read, and should therefore be discarded, or some effort made to create an interest in them; they record the amounts spent for fiction and for non-fiction; and they afford a basis of comparison with the statistics of other libraries. The institution which does not keep a careful record of the growth of the library and the extent of its use, is unable to render a proper cost-accounting for this expenditure of the public money; the institution library which is locked during most of the week, and intermittently or carelessly administered, is making poor returns for the money invested.

Since the efficient institution library has, in addition to a regular book fund, a provision for continuous and intelligent supervision, the question arises as to whether this service should be performed by a state supervisor; by a resident trained librarian who has no other duties; by an officer or employee who has this duty in addition to regular full-time work; or by one of the inmates of the institution, a patient, a member, or a pupil.

The supervising librarian comes to the institution with the prestige which a state official enjoys; she is not only the representative of a state

¹⁰ A. C. Hill, *American Prison Association Proceedings*, 1913, 161.

¹¹ Letter of September 15, 1913.

board, but has had training and experience in her own profession and thus has the confidence and coöperation of the institution officers. Through her knowledge of the needs of the library, she is able to strengthen the collection by the addition of new books, the replacement of those which are worn out, and the discarding of others which are unsuitable; by classification and the installation of records, the collection may be made usable. A special advantage lies in the fact that the assistance given by the inmates of the institution is of value to them as well as to the library. Aid in preparing books for circulation, in making records, in binding and mending, affords a real educational opportunity and a light and agreeable occupation to those who are not able to perform other tasks. The visit of the supervising librarian is often made the occasion of talks on books and reading; Miss Carey's suggestion of ten years ago, of required literature courses in the schools and courses in reading for the prisoners, would seem to offer great possibilities. Warden Robert W. McClaughry, then at Joliet, commended such courses in a paper read before the American Prison Association in 1898.¹²

Nor does the interest of the supervisor fail to extend to reading privileges for the officers and employees, though, as the funds are limited, the library can not be selected with their needs as the first consideration. It is possible to provide new and popular books through the so-called "rental collection," in use in many public libraries. A sum of money is advanced, with which new books are purchased, which are loaned for a small daily fee, usually two cents. When a book has paid for itself, the rental fee is abolished; magazines may be circulated in the same way.

The medical libraries in the hospitals need careful organization, catalogues and other records are necessary, and reports, journals, and pamphlet material must be filed. The proper care of such a library requires the constant supervision of an educated person trained in library methods. Another important development is the courses given in the nurses' training course suggested by Miss Carey in 1913.¹³ Such courses in literature and art were first given by Miss Jones at the McLean Hospital in 1913, and continued since, with the addition of one on current events.

"Since the hospitals are not able to select for their training schools only those nurses who are already well educated, obviously the next best thing to do is to try to give them, during their period of training, a broader culture and a wider knowledge of the things which make for companionship . . . These courses have proved very successful. The nurses have responded with an enthusiasm which has made the giving of these lectures a delight, and the effect was immediately felt upon the wards. Nurses read more and better books, and they have interested the patients in the lectures so that many of them have been roused from their lethargy to help, criticize,

¹² C. R. Henderson, *Penal and Reformatory Institutions*, 184.

¹³ Miriam E. Carey, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 15:175-76.

and supplement the nurses' notes from their broader knowledge. To many of the nurses a new world of books and pictures has been opened."¹⁴

The course on books and reading included twelve lessons:

1. Use of the library: arrangement of the books; method of charging books.
2. Reference books, periodicals and newspapers.
3. Getting patients to read; what to avoid, what to suggest; reading aloud.
4. Books on history, biography, art, economics, sociology.
5. Outdoor books; games and occupations; handicrafts.
- 6- 9. Fiction.
- 10-12. Poetry.¹⁵

Perhaps the best endorsement of the work of the supervising librarian lies in the action taken by the superintendents of the Iowa institutions, asking that such an officer be again appointed, after the work had lapsed for three years. Some two years after the organization of the work in Iowa, the Board of Control wrote to the superintendents, requesting their opinions in regard to its value.

"The head of one institution thought that such work was not necessary, that he was capable of doing the work, but if there was to be a state librarian, Miss Carey was the one for the place. The other fourteen were warm in their praise for the work, several letters from the hospitals for the insane spoke of the remedial effects of the work of the library on the patients. All these institutions regarded the work very highly."¹⁶

At the conference shortly before the work was resumed, several of the superintendents voiced their appreciation of the value of the supervising librarian to their institutions:

"There is not anything about our institutions that can be made more valuable than our libraries, yet without some one technically and intellectually fitted to look after that department of the institution it will not receive the encouragement it should have, and will not be used as it should be, and will not be a factor in doing good that it should do . . . It was particularly noticeable that some of the boys increased very much in their progress in study, after the idea of reading was encouraged and brought out as it was when we expected Miss Carey to come regularly, who knew how to talk to us, and how to advise us in the matter of the best books to read, and the way to read them."¹⁷

"I have never in my experience in hospital work seen anything like the progress in library development which was made in our institution and other institutions of the state, during the time we had a general librarian, and I suspect that the other superintendents will agree with me in saying, that the last two years without this supervising head we have made little or no progress. We have done well if we have

¹⁴ Edith Kathleen Jones, *American Journal of Insanity* 72:298.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 301-3.

¹⁶ *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 13:130. 1911.

¹⁷ W. L. Kuser, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 13:126-27. 1911.

kept up to the standard that was evolved during the time that we had a librarian, and I think it behooves each and every one of us to restore that condition if we can."¹⁸

There is, as yet, no state or federal institution which employs a librarian who has had training in a library school. The McLean Hospital, where Miss Jones has filled the position since 1904, is a private institution. It would seem as if a state hospital, which is an institution for scientific research as well as for custodial care, might consider the appointment of such an officer, to divide her time between the library for the patients, and the reference collection for the use of the medical staff. The medical journals, the transactions and bulletins of societies, and the reports of other institutions, should be checked as they are received, and note made of articles of special interest to any member of the staff. A record should be kept as these are issued to anyone, and at the end of the year they should be carefully collated and prepared for binding. The pamphlet material of value should be filed in boxes or placed in binders upon the shelves. The case records require careful filing and supervision, and, if the hospital issues any publications, there would be need for editing and indexing. A trained librarian is supposed to be fairly familiar with physiological and chemical terms and with foreign languages, and hence able to collect material for reports or papers, by consulting the indexes to journals. This work, in addition to that for the patients and the courses given in the training class, should eventually take the full time of a trained librarian; if the library were small and developing slowly, the position might be combined with that of the teacher of kindergarten, or handicrafts.

Such a combination of teacher and librarian offers great possibilities in the institutions for the feeble-minded, for delinquents, the schools and hospitals for children, and those for the blind and the deaf, and even the prisons, as well; in several such institutions, the teacher who gives part-time library service has attended a short six-weeks course offered by the library commission. This is an excellent beginning, an augury of the time when there will be a general demand for some one with more training along the lines of book selection and the use of reference books, and with a knowledge of books in various lines, particularly literature for children.

In many of the institutions to-day an employee,—the stenographer, or mail clerk, or telephone operator,—gives the library what time can be spared from regular daily duties. An officer who has a knowledge and love of books will be interested in building up a good collection, but it is needless to say that there are usually few hours available for studying the needs of the library or for widely extending its influence.

There is occasionally an inmate who has had a good general education, and is familiar with books; such a person will do excellent work under a supervising librarian. Without such supervision this plan is seldom success-

¹⁸ W. P. Crumbacker, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 13:127. 1911.

ful, for the term of service is rarely continuous, either by reason of illness or of a short period in residence. "The problem of library service in the hospital," said Miss Carey, in 1907, "is the attendant." There is to-day the same problem of enlisting the aid of the employee who is not interested in extending the use of the library; the librarian who can overcome this indifference must have the authority of a regular officer of the institution.

CHAPTER V

ACTIVITIES OF LIBRARY ASSOCIATIONS IN REGARD TO INSTITUTION LIBRARIES

The first recognition on the part of librarians that the institution libraries were a new and important field of service, came in 1907, when, at the conference of the American Library Association, Miss Carey read a paper on the work as initiated and carried on in Iowa. As a result of the interest aroused, the League of Library Commissions, meeting at the same time, appointed a Committee on Library Work in State Institutions. At the meeting of the league in 1908,¹ the committee reported that it had sent a questionnaire to the commissions of the several states, asking what attempts had been made to coöperate with the officials of their institutions. Twenty-eight commissions replied:—in one state, books were purchased for special traveling libraries to be sent to the institutions; five commissions gave frequent assistance or advice; ten had attempted coöperation, two reporting that their offers had been received with indifference, and two that their aid had not been welcomed; twelve had made no effort to approach the management of the institutions. In most institutions they all agreed there was no financial provision for purchasing books or administering the library.

In 1909, at the meeting of the league,² the committee, in its second and final report, emphasized the great demand for books on the part of the inmates of the institution, who lacked the means of initiating better library facilities. It, therefore, recommended that the commissions should make every effort to get in touch with the institutions, and suggested several methods of approach. They should secure statistics of the institution libraries and include the figures of accessions and book circulation among those of the other libraries of the state; librarians should visit the institutions and, if opportunity arose, give brief talks on books; they should send to them, as to the public libraries, the monthly numbers of the American Library Association *Book List*, a selection of the new books recommended for purchase, with descriptive annotations; they should offer help in book selection and book buying, and should volunteer to send traveling libraries to the institutions, especially to the insane hospitals.

At the meeting at which this report was presented, Mrs. Percival Sneed, of the Georgia library commission, asked that a committee be appointed to consider the question of libraries of the federal prisons; the warden of the Atlanta penitentiary, she said, had spoken at a recent meeting

¹*American Library Association Bulletin* 2:312-13. 1908.

²*Ibid.*, 3:339-41. 1909.

in regard to the library needs of his institution. A Committee on Libraries in Federal Prisons was appointed, and made its first report in 1910.³ It had communicated with the wardens, receiving the information that the government had made no appropriation for books at the Atlanta prison; that, at the Fort Leavenworth penitentiary, additions were made "as often as there are funds to buy books"; and that the library of the prison at McNeill Island, Washington, had no financial support except from visitors. As the federal prisons were under the control of the Department of Justice, the committee communicated with the Attorney-General, suggesting the need of financial support, and adequate supervision for prison libraries. The Acting Attorney-General replied that in his opinion the appropriation was sufficient, the administration of the libraries satisfactory, and any change in the policy of the department was neither "necessary or advisable." The committee closed the report with the suggestion that librarians be asked to visit the institutions, to confer with the wardens in regard to the proper library standards for the organization and supervision of the book collections.

The second report of the committee, at the meeting of the league in 1911,⁴ stated that each institution had been visited by a librarian, who had reported to the committee as follows:

"At Leavenworth, the warden was anxious to improve conditions, and gave the visitor permission to withdraw some objectionable books. Each cell contained two men, and the electric light was so arranged that the man in the lower berth could not see to read; the warden was anxious to have a reading room to which trusted men might be sent. There was no fixed appropriation for books, no new magazines were subscribed for, and there was no prison school. At Atlanta there was a school, but there were no funds to purchase books for the general library. At McNeill Island, practically all the books were donated, there were few, if any, purchases."

The committee had already been in correspondence with the Acting Attorney-General, who wrote, in January, 1911:

"The Attorney-General is empowered to incur such expenses for library books as he deems proper and advisable. Under this sub-appropriation the Attorney-General is authorized to purchase as many books, as in his judgment are required. Should the appropriation be found at any time insufficient for the purchase of an ample supply of books, the Department, in submitting its estimates of appropriations to Congress, would ask for an increase in the sub-appropriation. It has never been found advisable as yet, to ask for any increase for this purpose, and I am of the opinion that no increase is necessary."

He wrote again in February:

"Some time ago the attention of Congress was called to the necessity of providing teachers for the prison schools, but Congress did not accede to the request, and we have at present no school teachers in the prison, other than the chaplain, and now and then a guard who is more or less accomplished in teaching."

³ *Ibid.*, 4:734-38. 1910.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 5:206-10. 1911.

In commenting upon this statement the report said:

"While the library can be of great value in an educational system in the penitentiaries, its usefulness is nowise dependent on such a system . . . the reading of recreational and inspirational books alone would more than compensate the penitentiary for their cost, and there are hundreds of prisoners of education who are not dependent upon a special system for the enjoyment of reading. The greatest value of the books will not be secured until they are in charge of skilled persons, who can select them most intelligently and make their contents accessible through modern library methods; but it is a disgrace that a wealthy nation should limit the reading even of its prisoners to books that are filthy and in rags and which are largely chance contributions by visitors."

At the meeting of the league in 1912,⁵ the committee report stated that the Department of Justice had ordered printed catalogues to be issued for the book collections at Atlanta and McNeill Island. The McNeill list showed the inadequacy of the library and the great lack of books of any real value. The Attorney-General then wrote to the secretary of the American Library Association, asking for a list of \$100 worth of books, excluding fiction, to supplement the library at McNeill Island. At the request of the secretary the librarian at Tacoma visited the penitentiary and made a choice of books not represented in the collection. Reports from the prisons showed that at Atlanta all books bought from the general fund were school books, magazines that were either subscribed for by prisoners or sent by their friends; magazines for the library at Leavenworth were obtained in the same way; the warden at McNeill had secured about fifty magazines by soliciting them from the publishers.

During the discussion which followed the report, consideration was given to a plan to introduce into Congress a bill to provide adequate library facilities for the prisons. It was finally decided to endeavor to secure the cooperation of the American Prison Association, as well as to have personal interviews with the Attorney-General, in order to present the necessity for a more liberal financial policy. The need of a buying list for prison libraries was also discussed at the meeting.

The fourth and final report of the committee was made at the 1913 meeting of the league.⁶ As the result of personal action by librarians, there had been a prospect that the budget of the Department of Justice would include at least twenty-five hundred dollars each for the prisons at Atlanta and Leavenworth, and five hundred dollars for that at McNeill Island. The effort to secure this increase was, however, unsuccessful.

The New York Library Association has had a standing Committee on Prison Libraries since 1909. At the meeting of the association in 1912, a session was given over to the discussion of libraries in penal institutions.

⁵ *American Library Association Bulletin* 6:324-28. 1912.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 7:374. 1913.

The report of the committee, presented at this time,⁷ recommended that an effort be made to secure a legislative act, creating the office of supervising librarian for state institutions. At the meeting of the succeeding year,⁸ the Association voted to recommend to the State Prison Commission the appointment of a library inspector for penal institutions. The chairman of the State Prison Commission requested the state library to investigate the libraries in penal institutions; as a result of this survey the committee submitted to the Prison Reform Commission a report, closing with a request for an increase in the appropriation for the libraries, the printing of a buying list of books for the prisons, and the appointment of a supervising inspector, as well as a competent civil librarian, for such institutions. The Prison Reform Commission accordingly recommended to the Governor that attention be given to improving the libraries of penal institutions, and that their administration be placed under the state library. No legislative act authorizing the appointment of a supervisor has yet been passed, but the state library, at the request of the Prison Reform Commission, has prepared a list of books for prison libraries, the first section of which was issued in 1916.

The efforts of the American Library Association for institution libraries, have been along other lines than an attempt to secure legislation or appropriations. In 1913, the association published a list entitled, *A Thousand Books for the Hospital Library*, compiled by Miss Jones of the McLean Hospital, with additions and annotations by the institution librarians of Minnesota, Iowa, and Nebraska. This was intended to serve as a buying list, as well as an aid to nurses in suggesting means of interesting their patients in reading; it was sold, like the other publications of the association at a price which merely covered the cost of publication.

In 1915, the executive board of the association appointed a Committee on Library Work in Hospitals and Charitable and Penal Institutions. One member of the committee has published and distributed several articles on libraries in insane hospitals, the most important of which was a syllabus on a course in books and reading for a nurses' training class; in addition, she edited for some months a department on institution libraries for the magazine, *The Modern Hospital*. The chairman of the committee took charge of the section meeting on institution libraries at the 1916 Conference of Charities and Corrections, at which the results of a survey of the institution libraries of the United States were presented. A *Manual for Institution Libraries* was prepared by another member, and published by the American Library Association. This attempted to present in practical form the standard methods of library practice, which were adapted to conditions in institutions. The committee has made a collection of pictures of institution libraries, to be used at state charities and corrections conferences, and as a reference collection to be loaned to superintendents or to others interested.

⁷ *New York Libraries* 3:230-33. 1913.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 4:144-47.

CHAPTER VI

THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF THE INSTITUTION LIBRARY

It seems certain that in the future development of the institution libraries, they will be under either the board of control or the library commission, or a similar agency. If placed under the library commission, the work has the advantage of continuity with the other library interests of the state; the executive officer of the commission is alive to the possibility of further service and the connection promises permanency, a coöperation in the use of books and other collections, and the influence of accepted standards in regard to records and equipment. On the other hand, if the institutions have been placed under the board of control it would seem that the supervision of the institution libraries might well be considered the duty of an officer of the board; in either case there should be a supervisor, whose authority should come from the board of control.

Realizing the special problems of the institutions, the superintendents in Iowa, in 1905, and again in 1911, urged the selection of a woman for the office. The reformatory and the prison are the only institutions where a different choice might be urged; experience has shown that the solution lies in the appointment of a woman of maturity and judgment, as well as education and training, and experience in her chosen field. In order to secure such an incumbent of the office, the salary paid should range from \$1,500 to \$2,000 per annum.

Both economy and efficiency would be increased if suitable headquarters were furnished and the work was centralized. It is an advantage to buy books in the open market, and a considerable saving could be effected in the book fund of each institution, if the latest publications were purchased from a library agent and other books obtained at sales or by personal visits to second-hand dealers. The office equipment should include the usual lists which aid in book selection, and might well have a union list of the books in all the institutions, to prevent duplication in buying and to aid in building up weak departments. There should be samples of library furnishings and supplies, such as magazine binders, newspaper files, book supports, and similar equipment. This plan would presuppose office room and clerical and other assistance when necessary.

The library of such institutions should be a separate department, recognized in its budget by a regular annual appropriation, and the statistics of its growth and use included in the annual report of the superintendent. There should be a minimum of one thousand volumes for each institution. As was suggested by Miss Carey at the Iowa quarterly conference in

December, 1916, the penal institutions which receive visitors' fees, and are also provided with able-bodied workers of sound mentality, might build up a collection of books in foreign languages and the technical trades, to be loaned, as need arose, to the other libraries. One institution might undertake the binding of all the magazines, another the care of a joint collection of victrola records, music scores, and pictures.

In the insane hospital, at least, and eventually in most of the institutions, a trained librarian should administer the local collection, giving in most cases part-time service to the school. The assistance of the inmates should be sought, not only for the practical value of their service, but also on account of the benefit they will derive from such employment.

What after all is the real justification for an interest in the institution libraries on the part of both the officials, and the public which supports the institutions? Miss Carey, who has done more than anyone else to arouse this interest, has stated it thus:¹

"It is not that books may be bought from time to time or that they may be taken care of according to the latest methods; it is not that accurate statistics may be had at a moment's notice, or that the library may make as good a showing as other departments, but it is that the use of books may increase, and not only that more people may read, but that they may read better books individually; it is that the reading habit may be incorporated into the life of each resident in an institution; that no person set apart from society may be denied any privilege connected with books or derived from them, which the freest, richest, happiest, or best citizen enjoys elsewhere. Books are perhaps the only things of which this may be possible in institutions. Food, clothing, shelter,—these may be, and are . . . good and adequate, but they can not be the best in existence, from the nature of the case. But of books, the very best are as easily provided in a hospital as in a palace, in a school for feeble-minded as in a university, for the merit of a book does not lie in the costliness of its binding or in any outward sign of excellence."

¹ Miriam E. Carey, *Iowa Bulletin of State Institutions* 13:86. 1911.

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